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We used to think the practice of calling every patient to remind them of their appointment was invasive and insulting. The current culture seems to demand that we revisit that concept.

Many of you have responsibilities that the term "multitasking" doesn't quite cover. This sometimes causes you to have trouble keeping track of appointments. If this is sounding familiar, please take advantage of the following services:

- A. We can fax you on the morning of your scheduled visit. We prefer this method, since it allows us to contact you early in the day, and if you need to reschedule, it can be done fairly seamlessly. You may also save time if you need to reschedule by faxing us early in the day at (703) 319-3978.
- B. We can call you. Again, we prefer to do this early, so any changes in plans are comparatively simple to make.

If you wish to have us do either of the above, please make sure we have "good" work or home numbers for you.

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Our Doctors Produce New Chiropractic Textbook

Drs. Marion Todres and Charles Masarsky are the editors of a new textbook: *Somatovisceral Aspects of Chiropractic: An Evidence-Based Approach*. The term *somatovisceral* refers to the relationship of the musculoskeletal system (the *soma*) to the health of the internal organs (the *viscera*). The book's sixteen guest authors take a research-centered look at the beneficial effects of the chiropractic adjustment on many aspects of health, including cardiovascular functions, respiration, and the immune system, among other topics.

While this volume is primarily written for chiropractic students and practitioners, Drs. Todres and Masarsky believe that it will be an informative source for health-conscious consumers as well. We have a copy of our new book in the reception area for your perusal. It can be purchased through the publisher, Churchill Livingstone, a subsidiary of Harcourt Health Sciences (1-800-426-4545). It is also available by visiting <http://www.amazon.com>.

Beginning with this issue, we will provide brief synopses of most of the chapters in our book.

(This article is a brief synopsis of some of the material in Chapter 1 of *Somatovisceral Aspects of Chiropractic: An Evidence-Based Approach*, Masarsky, C.S., Todres-Masarsky, M. (eds), Churchill Livingstone, New York, 2001.)

The Science of Tone

The founder of chiropractic health care, D. D. Palmer, viewed his new system as a "science of tone". To many people, tone is something you go to the gym to develop. It is a very important aspect of fitness, to be sure, but a somewhat limited concept on which to base an entire health profession. However, the term was understood in a much broader context by Palmer. He put it this way:

Life is the expression of tone. In that sentence is the basic principle of chiropractic....Tone is expressed in functions by normal elasticity, activity, strength and excitability of the various organs, as observed in a state of health.

Tone in this sense refers not only to the visible results of exercise (muscular tone), but also to the expansion and contraction of blood vessels (vasomotor tone), the degree of tension in the breathing passages (bronchial tone) and the rate of digestive activity (gastrointestinal tone). In fact, tone refers to the rate or intensity of function of any tissue or organ. In Palmer's system, nerve function--neurological tone--was the most important consideration in chiropractic health care. When examination revealed disturbed tone in a spinal nerve (subluxation), it was seen as a potential cause of dysfunction in every tissue or organ controlled by that nerve. For this reason, subluxation has traditionally been viewed as a threat to the health and wellness of the whole person.

During the 1960's and 1970's the profession largely backed away from the broad health implications of Palmer's science of tone. In order to gain recognition for the chiropractic colleges, access to research funding and insurance coverage, the profession began to position itself simply as a drugless treatment for back pain and certain other musculoskeletal pain syndromes. For many years, doctors of chiropractic who discussed traditional chiropractic principles with their patients and the general public were harassed, often by their own colleagues.

In 1996, the following statement signaled a return of the science of tone to the chiropractic mainstream:

Chiropractic is concerned with the preservation and restoration of health, and focuses particular attention on the subluxation. A subluxation is a complex of functional and/or structural and/or pathological articular changes *that compromise neural integrity and may influence organ system function and general health.* (Italics added)

This statement was signed by the president or dean of every chiropractic college in North America. It was later endorsed by every major U.S. and inter-national chiropractic organization.

Surprisingly, this logical stance is often misunderstood. Even patients who have known us for many years sometimes tell us, "I know you're against drugs," or "I guess you're pretty much opposed to medical doctors," and other things of that sort. To be clear, mainstream doctors of chiropractic do not claim that subluxation is the only issue in health care, it's simply the issue that we focus on. We do not advocate firing your medical doctor, throwing away medically necessary drugs or closing the hospitals!

We do claim that chiropractic health care is concerned with more than "pains in the butt" and "cricks in the neck". Subluxation threatens your whole-body tone. The chiropractic adjustment helps restore your neurological fitness. This is a claim that we make not only on the basis of the Palmer tradition or the authority of the chiropractic colleges, but on a growing body of scientific evidence.

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