



# Vienna Chiropractic Associates, P.C.

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## *Excerpted from the 9/04 - 12/04 Newsletter*

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### **Volunteers Needed for Research on Human Performance**

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Earlier in the year, we collected some data bearing on the relationship between chiropractic care and human performance. We would like to have data on a few more people before going to publication, which will probably be some time next year. There are two projects open:

*Mid-Day Slump:* If you feel sleepy or mentally foggy at a certain time of day (typically, mid-afternoon), you are invited to participate in this study. The effects of a chiropractic adjustment on sleepiness, general well being, and concentration will be measured by a series of brief questionnaires. This study requires approximately an hour of your time. It is most appropriate for a new patient or for an established patient who hasn't been adjusted in one month or more.

*Bowling:* Do you participate in a bowling league? If you do, or if you simply bowl on a regular basis, we would like to compare your scores on a minimum of three games before and three games after a chiropractic adjustment. Again, the best candidates for this study would be new patients or established patients who have been away for a month or more.

Our research is not grant-funded, so we cannot offer you cash compensation for your participation. You will be entitled to a complimentary chiropractic visit (in addition to the "research adjustment") usable any time within three months of your participation. (If you are a new patient, this would include your initial case history and examination, your initial "research adjustment", and a second adjustment to be used within three months of your participation.) If you are interested, please let us know.

**Quick Anatomy Fact** [Table of Contents](#) | [Top of page](#)

Usually, we chiropractors find ourselves describing disturbances in joint function. Here, we'd like to devote a moment to the appreciation of the normal.

In the most common type of joint, the ends of two bones are covered with a smooth, glassy form of cartilage. (This is *hyaline* cartilage.) A special fluid lubricates these cartilage surfaces. (This lubricant is called *synovial fluid*, and this type of joint is called a *synovial joint*.)

When a typical joint of this sort is maintained in good health, its ability to move in an articulate, smooth manner is really quite amazing. The amount of friction generated by the motion of the cartilage surfaces against each other is actually less than the friction generated by two pieces of ice sliding against each other!

{Reference: Triano J. Interaction of Spinal Biomechanics and Physiology. In Haldeman S (editor). *Principles and Practice of Chiropractic*. Appleton & Lange, East Norwalk, CT, 1992.}

**Research Review: The Vision Thing** [Table of Contents](#) | [Top of page](#)

From time to time, after an adjustment, a patient tells us that they can concentrate on written material with less fatigue, or that bright lights do not bother them as much as before, or that things in general seem less blurry. This is especially likely to happen when the patient's misalignment or restriction (subluxation) was related to strain or trauma to the neck or upper back.

This sort of experience seems odd to the layperson. In fact, even health care professionals have historically dismissed the relationship between spinal trauma and visual disturbance as "psychosomatic" or "hysterical".

In fact, it is not at all rare for blurred vision, double vision, partial loss of color vision, sensitivity to bright light, and other visual disturbances to be related to events that generate subluxation. For example, the prevalence of blurred vision following whiplash accidents is approximately 42%.<sup>1</sup>

While we do not know for sure what causes this, it is known that nerves that travel from the neck and upper back to the eye help to control the size of the pupil and the shape of the lens. These spinal nerves also control the diameter of the blood vessels that supply the retina and the visual portion of the brain itself.

An Australian ophthalmologist published the case of a 33-year-old man with tunnel vision in both eyes after a whiplash accident.<sup>2</sup> The tunnel vision disappeared after a session of spinal manipulation. A similar case by the same author involved a 10-year-old girl, who experienced tunnel vision in one eye after a sports injury.<sup>3</sup> She also responded to spinal manipulation.

These cases are quite dramatic, but sometimes the effect of subluxation on vision is much more subtle. In a recent chiropractic study, a series of 50 patients with cervical (neck area) subluxations had their vision checked at their first chiropractic visit and two weeks into care.<sup>4</sup> Not only did these patients demonstrate significant improvement as a group, but some patients with normal (20/20) vision at the beginning of the study had better than normal vision at the two week mark. These were people with no eye complaints, yet subluxation was apparently having a subtle deleterious effect, preventing their vision from reaching its full potential.

Don't get us wrong – vision is affected by genetics and many other factors beside subluxation. After all, Drs. Masarsky and Todres get adjusted regularly, and they both wear glasses! Just realize that subluxation – unlike genetics – appears to be one *correctible* source of visual disturbance, according to current evidence.

*It is hoped that this material will be of use to you in making wise health care decisions and informed referrals.*

### References

1. Lord S, Barnsley L, Wallis B, Bogduk N. Chronic Zygapophysial Joint Pain After Whiplash: A Placebo-Controlled Prevalence Study. *Spine*, 1996; 21:1737.
2. Gorman RF, et al. Case Report: Spinal Strain and Visual Perception Deficit. *Chiropractic Journal of Australia*, 1994; 24:131.
3. Gorman RF. Monocular Visual Loss After Closed Head Trauma: Immediate Resolution Associated with Spinal Manipulation. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, 1993; 18:308.
4. Kessinger R, Boneva D. Changes in Visual Acuity in Patients Receiving Upper Cervical Specific Chiropractic Care. *Journal of Vertebral Subluxation Research*, 1998; 2(1):43.

**The Autumn Leaves or Raking It In** [Table of Contents](#) | [Top of page](#)

Every autumn, the Washington metro area bursts into glorious color as the leaves turn. Then those leaves fall off the trees and onto your lawn. There they stay until you or someone in your household rakes them. May we be of assistance?

1. The basic movements involved in raking are essentially those involved in vacuuming, just with exposure to fresh air. You can save your back by using shorter strokes, closer to your body. Don't "lunge and drag" the rake unless you're fond of pain and bad body mechanics.
2. Watch your head position. Try not to throw your head and neck forward, dragging them back to a semi-erect position with every stroke. Combine those short, tight strokes with a more balanced head position to avoid subluxation.
3. If you have a tendency toward allergies, wear a pollen/dust mask. When you come into the house, hit the showers and wash your

- hair. You're covered with leaf litter, which includes a great deal of mold. Don't walk around dusted with it when you don't have to.
4. If you're a desk jockey, you may be a little sore after raking. That's usually just your body complaining about having the rest of it called into service. If discomfort persists, or your trunk or neck movement is restricted on one side, it's time to give us a call.

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