

CHAPTER 2

Principles of Chiropractic Healthcare

- **Lesson Purpose**

To give the student a solid background in the principles of chiropractic healthcare, including educational background and scope of practice.

- **Lesson Objective**

Upon completion the student will:

- Learn the principles of chiropractic healthcare
- Understand the chiropractic approach to healthcare
- Learn the educational requirements for chiropractic physicians
- Learn the scope of practice for chiropractic physicians

“These are my principles. If you don’t like them, I have others.”
—Groucho Marx

CHAPTER 2:

Principles of Chiropractic Healthcare

Review pages 9-22 of the textbook for this section of the workbook

DEFINE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Chapter Review:

As a Chiropractic Therapy Assistant it is critical that you fully understand and are able to clearly communicate the principles of chiropractic healthcare. As discussed in Chapter 1, many of your duties as a CTA call on you to serve as a resource for the patient on information surrounding their chiropractic care. The effectiveness of your communication will shape their impression of you, their experience within the office, and could impact their understanding of chiropractic healthcare overall. Once you have a solid understanding of these principles, you will then have the ability to promote your practice, address patient inquiries, and represent your profession with confidence.

In this section of the workbook, you will find additional resources for the information discussed in Chapter 2 of the *Chiropractic Therapy Assistant, A Clinical Resource Guide* textbook. As you review both the textbook and workbook sections, you may utilize helpful study tools. Of course, many chiropractic offices will also have personalized scripts which may have additional information or more specifics as to your practice protocols. For the purposes of this study, you will only focus on the information provided.

STUDY TIPS

Helpful Study Ideas

- 1) Q & A Flash Cards** – *Use index cards and write common questions on the front and correctly worded answers on the back. Then, have a friend quiz you to reinforce your understanding of these principles.*
- 2) Chiropractic Brochure** – *Using the information in this chapter, create your own Chiropractic Brochure. Draw pictures and be creative. The time spent on this activity will help provide a visual format for your learning, while giving you a personalized study tool.*
- 3) Meet the New Patient** – *Arrange with your doctor or another individual to practice fielding common questions in a conversational atmosphere. Imagine you are in a public setting and encounter a conversation regarding healthcare. Use the information to confidently explain the principles of chiropractic healthcare.*

What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic is a natural, drug free, conservative, non-invasive healthcare approach addressing various physiological and biomechanical aspects with a proven ability to relieve pain, increase vitality, and promote well being.

Chiropractic Treatment

What to expect on the first visit:

Consultation – Discussion of preexisting condition and history of the patient.

Examination – The nature of the problem will be evaluated typically through physical tests, spinal and extremity movement and posture. X-rays and further diagnostic tests may be recommended to further assess the patient.

Analysis and Action plan – After review, the doctor will explain the issue and present a strategy and care plan for correction.

How does chiropractic correct spinal problems?

Chiropractic healthcare involves restoring joint function and removing nerve interference by utilizing corrective force through a method of treatment known as the chiropractic adjustment. This method of treatment is unique to chiropractic. There are various adjusting techniques, as well as other treatments including physical agent modalities, manual therapy, exercise rehabilitation and many more that are utilized in the chiropractic practice; however, each patient's care plan will be customized to address their individual needs and will be centered on the chiropractic adjustment.

How much care does a patient need?

Every patient is different and care will be dependent on their goals and condition. For care and treatment of specific conditions with a primary goal of pain relief, healing rates vary from person to person. Preventative healthcare routines call for chiropractic appointments on a consistent basis.

How do you find the right chiropractor?

It is important to research and consult with a selection of physicians before deciding on any healthcare provider. Take time to discuss your healthcare needs and expectations with them to find a doctor who has likeminded goals.

Chiropractic Approach to Healthcare

How does chiropractic work?

The human body possesses the natural ability to restore itself through the work of a healthy nervous system. Outside factors cause spinal joint restriction and/or misalignment which result in irritation, pressure and a number of other symptoms, as well as impaired nerve coordination. Chiropractic care corrects these structural distortions by restoring the body to its optimal form and function, and clears the path for the body to maintain its own health.

Who should see a chiropractor?

Chiropractic treatment can help people of all ages experience relief and improved health.

Is chiropractic safe?

Absolutely! Chiropractic is among the safest health care practices, promoting a non-surgical and medicine free approach to care.

Educational Background of a Chiropractic Physician

What is the CCE?

The Council of Chiropractic Education (CCE) establishes the accreditation criteria for the education of chiropractic physicians. The comprehensive study material a chiropractor is required to complete is similar to that of a medical doctor with the inclusion of specific areas of relevance such as chiropractic philosophy and technique, public health, clinical nutrition, and office procedure and jurisprudence. Techniques are refined and perfected during classes and internships. Finally, all doctors of chiropractic must pass national and state board exams, as well as performance standards before entering the field.

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) establishes testing parameters and specific examinations to qualify the doctoral candidates for licensure.

Part I: Basic Sciences (passing required by all 50 states)

Part II: Clinical Sciences (passing required by all 50 states)

Part III: Written Clinical Competency (passing required by 48 states and 2 other states accept)

Part IV: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (passing required by 48 states, 1 state accepts, 1 state licenses without)

In addition, upon the completion of many hours of extensive physiotherapy coursework, an independent physiotherapy exam is also required in almost every state.

Along with passing the NBCE examinations, many states require anywhere from one to four additional state administered evaluations.

Scope of Chiropractic Practice

Defining Chiropractic Scope

Doctors of chiropractic evaluate and facilitate biomechanical and neuro-biological function and integrity through the use of appropriate conservative diagnostic and chiropractic care procedures.

Defining Chiropractic Practice

Why regulate healthcare professionals?

Regulation is required to protect the public's safety, health, and welfare. Government statute provides for a board to handle regulations for each licensing profession whose duties may include:

- Investigate consumer complaints
- Oversee the general application of health care laws

- Develop and update regulations to better outline appropriate conduct and what the consumer should anticipate
- Continually review the credentials required to practice ethically, safely, and efficiently
- Use appropriate disciplinary action or retrain those who have violated statutes of regulation
- Assist other professions or jurisprudences by functioning in a global regulatory community

Where are chiropractors licensed?

Chiropractors are licensed in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, numerous US territories, and many other countries throughout the world.

When a license is granted to a chiropractor, what does this mean to the public?

Through a license, the public is assured by the board that the doctor has met certain criteria and that this individual continues to abide by regulations or laws of that state or providence.

What credentials are required by U.S. jurisdictions?

Common criteria across jurisdictional borders include:

- Pre-chiropractic education
- Graduation from an accredited chiropractic college
- Rigorous examinations
- Background investigation
- Understanding the law

What should the public expect from a licensed chiropractor?

While the core concept of practice remains the same, the scope may vary with the laws of the jurisdiction. Regardless, patients may commonly expect:

- A thorough physical examination to determine conditions which would be appropriate for chiropractic care
- Counsel on the appropriate care and what results may be expected
- Referral to another provider if chiropractic care is not appropriate for the patient's current condition
- Discussion and evaluation with the doctor as the care continues
- Clearly stated financial arrangements
- Appropriate, ethical care delivered in confidence with respect for privacy and dignity

What happens if a licensee violates these basic rights?

The regulatory board is required to discipline any doctor who does not abide by the laws and regulations. All complaints are thoroughly investigated. If need be, formal hearings may be conducted to hear testimony, determine facts and severity of the offense, and take action against the licensee if necessary.

How do you know if a licensee has been disciplined?

The public may contact the state board to determine the status of a license. Often this resource is available online through the state website. The Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards also maintains an online databank which provides information on public actions by chiropractic regulatory agencies related to licenses of individual practitioners.