

CHAPTER 7

Treatment Principles and Procedures

- **Lesson Purpose**

To give the student knowledge of common treatment principles and procedures in the chiropractic setting.

- **Lesson Objective**

Upon completion the student will:

- Learn common treatment procedures and techniques
- Learn common stretching protocols
- Learn the principles of physiotherapeutic modalities

Cherkin, DC and Mootz, RD gave an accurate accounting of what many in the chiropractic profession have been trying to relate to the public:

“Spinal manipulation and the profession most closely associated with its use, chiropractic, have gained a legitimacy within the United States healthcare system that until very recently seemed unimaginable. In the past several decades, chiropractic has undergone a remarkable transformation. Labeled an “unscientific cult” by organized medicine as little as 20 years ago, chiropractic is now recognized as the principal source of one of the few treatments of low-back pain, spinal manipulation. In the areas of training, practice, and research, chiropractic has emerged from the periphery of the health care system and is playing an increasingly important role in discussions of health care policy.”¹

Adapted from: AHCPR Research Report, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1997.

CHAPTER 7:

Treatment Principles and Procedures

Part 1: Chiropractic, Massage, and Stretching Techniques

Review pages 136-165 of the textbook for this section of the workbook

DEFINE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Chiropractic

Chiropractic was founded as a profession in 1895 by D.D. Palmer. The basis of Palmer's work came from his conclusion that interference in the nervous system can lead to disease. By removing subluxations, or a misalignment of the vertebral sections, patients are able to maintain a disease-free state. This dis-relationship in vertebral function and subsequent symptomatology may also be referred to as the Vertebral Subluxation Process. There are 5 components of the Vertebral Subluxation Complex: kinesiopathology, neuropathophysiology, myopathology, histopathology, and pathology. (Review Figure 7.A on pg 139)

Many chiropractors prefer to use the term functional spinal lesion when describing a subluxation. This term places emphasis on restoring spinal function by using adjustments/manipulation and accompanying soft tissue treatment and exercise rehabilitation to correct spinal disorders.

Although there are many different practice techniques used in chiropractic, the common denominator of treatment of joints and their surrounding tissue is the adjustment or manipulation of joints. **Manipulation** is the use of high velocity/low amplitude force that takes a joint beyond its passive range of motion into the parapsychological space. This space is where the sound that a chiropractic adjustment makes comes from, due to the release of gases within the joint. **Mobilization** is a low velocity technique that moves a joint within its passive range of motion. There are numerous different techniques of manipulation and mobilization that are used by chiropractors. Look at the box on the next page for some of these adjustment styles and review pages **142-148** for detailed information about these techniques.

- Diversified
- Activator Method
- CoxFlexion/Distracton
- Sacro-Occipital Technique
- NIMMO/Receptor Tonus
- Manipulative/Adjustment Instrument
- Logan Basic Technique
- Pierce-Stillwagon Technique
- Chiropractic Biophysics
- Blair Upper Cervical Technique
- Bio Energetic Synchronization Technique
- Extremity Manipulation
- Gonstead Technique
- Thompson Technique
- Applied Kinesiology
- Cranial Technique
- Palmer Upper Cervical
- Meric System
- Pettibon Systems Adjusting
- Toggle Recoil Technique
- Direct Non-force Technique
- Atlas Orthogonal Technique

Massage

Many chiropractic clinics utilize massage therapy as part of the myofascial component of therapy and rehabilitation patients receive and work well together in correcting the cause of injury and disease. Many different kinds of massage techniques are utilized in conjunction with chiropractic care including deep tissue, trigger point, hot stone, Swedish, active release, and acupressure. Other forms of massage therapy are listed in Figure 7.E on page 153.

Asking a patient about their pain pattern or pain referral when performing massage can be useful in determining what soft tissue might be involved in increasing pain. Certain areas of the muscle tend to refer pain to other parts of the body. By becoming familiar with these patterns, therapeutic massage treatments can be more beneficial.

Stretching

*Myofascial stretching techniques are often used in addition to other chiropractic treatments. Some of the benefits of stretching include helping to reduce muscle tension, improve coordination, increase of range of motion, prevent injury, and develop body awareness. When stretching a patient, it is important to avoid activating the body's stretch reflex. The **stretch reflex** occurs when the muscle being stretched is pushed beyond its capacity, causing it to tighten up. If pushed too far, a person can acquire micro tears in the muscle or tendon. There are several common stretching techniques that can be used in an office setting.*

1. **Ballistic Stretching-** using body momentum to push a muscle beyond its normal range of motion. Often seen as a bouncing motion and is performed by the individual. This type of stretch can increase injuries and is not recommended in most settings
2. **Dynamic Stretching-** using slow, controlled movements of the body to gently stretch a muscle within its normal range of motion. The stretch is performed by an individual and examples may be controlled leg swings and/or torso twists.
3. **Active Stretching-** a stretch position is taken and then held using nothing more than the strength of the agonist muscle to maintain the position. This stretch is performed by an individual and can improve flexibility and strength. Many yoga positions are examples of this.
4. **Passive Stretching-** a stretch position is held by another part of the body or with the assistance of another person. The muscle being stretched remains relaxed during most of the stretch.
5. **Isometric Stretching-** a type of stretch where there is an isometric contraction (tightening without moving) of a muscle followed by a period of relaxation. This can be performed by an individual but it is often done with the help of a partner.
6. **Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation (PNF) stretching-** This stretching technique is a combination of active and passive stretching that allows for more effective stretches in a shorter period of time. It is most effectively done with a partner.