

## **Chiropractic For Non-Surgical Treatment Of The Cervical Herniated Disc Introduction**

Many patients with a cervical herniated disc will go to a chiropractor even as the first step. Many of my patients have already seen chiropractors before they have seen me. I like chiropractic for the right patient. I had an opportunity to speak with a very experienced chiropractor, Dr. Louis Bisogni, about his approach to patients with a cervical herniated disc.

Que 1: When a patient comes to see you, they have got neck pain with pain going down the arm, maybe numbness, tingling, even a slight weakness, what do you do?

Ans 1: When patient walks in our door, we have him fill out the necessary forms, a history form and ergonomic form. We will then sit down and consult with that patient to be sure of their problem. We got to listen very intently to the details of their symptoms, and then we are going to go through a complete examination. One of the approaches is spinal manipulation and that is what we are licensed to do. The spinal manipulation helps to restore the function of the joint in order to help relieve the pain and to resolve the inflammation.

Que 2: Is that actually mean like cracking the neck, I mean do you actually...?

Ans 2: Okay, you posed a good question.

Sorry to ask you.

That is a great question.

Que 3: People come to me and they say "I am not going to a chiropractor, I mean, I am not allowing him to touch my neck," but, I have never had a problem with you touching anybody and just what is that, what do you do actually?

Ans 3: Okay, so, if the patient is going to receive a spinal manipulation, we can move the neck, the sound you are hearing is nothing more than little air bubbles releasing in the joint, in the facets, that is the sound, so that is really not anything to be afraid of or what we are attempting to do is move the vertebrae away from the nerve if it is pinching the nerve or to create a more healthy environment for that nerve and disc to live in, so on that next visit after visit one we determine, okay, this looks like a patient that is going to be helped through chiropractic. Now we are going to do the manipulation and that manipulation is to open up space, increase oxygenation, and all

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the studies show that that type of spinal manipulation will do that, increase blood flow, oxygenate the area, so by doing that, you are creating a healing effect.

Que 4: So is that done with your hands or is it like a big machine, like a traction machine, I mean, that is really like is that hands on?

Ans 4: The chiropractic could be done hands on for that type of problem for a cervical herniated disc. Yes is the answer to that. Of course, you may not want to do that type of manipulation. There are over 20 different chiropractic techniques to get to the same end, so now after you have evaluated and found that, look this patient has a herniated disc, I mean, I want to do that popping click sound, what I would want to do is maybe traction gently or even use their instrument techniques now to resolve that problem, decompression for example or traction. There is an activated instrument where you could actually move the vertebrae without actually twisting the neck.

Que 5: So, can the patient expect to feel better after the first visit? Sometimes people come back and they will say, lets stay from physical therapy saying from the treatment, "actually felt worse after the first visit," so what is the typical patient going to experience the first week of treatment with you?

Ans 5: After the first adjustment, it can go from, the patient has almost a miraculous release because that adjustment has been shown and studies have shown also that endorphin reduction or our body's natural painkillers are produced with that immediate thrust. Okay, so that is where the pain control comes in. Now to actually correct the problem and keep that bone in a new position will take several adjustments, so that the muscle memory takes hold, so it is almost like an orthodontist where you know, they put braces on teeth for a certain period of time, now the braces come off and if you do not wear your retainer. I don't know you have kids and I have kids, and you do not wear the retainer \_\_\_\_\_ would be to gently strengthen those muscles, so week 1 up to week 4 to 6 maybe you know, you are just manipulating, gently giving it a rest.

So the bottom line in chiropractic is that it is now a very traditional type of treatment and many patients are using this even as a first line when they have the cervical herniated disc. For me personally though, I would not go to a chiropractor for manipulation, if I had a medium-to-large sized herniated disc and there was pressure on my spinal cord or even on the nerve. So two things, number one, look for a really good chiropractor that has good references amongst your friends and in the community and number two, make sure you have discussed your condition with the chiropractor before you start the treatment. If you have got a good doctor treating you, I think you may do well and it is certainly worth a try.

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