

## **WHAT TO EXPECT ON MY FIRST VISIT TO MY CHIROPRACTOR?**

The first thing a chiropractor will do is ask you about the health complaints about which you are chiefly concerned. The DC will also ask about your family history, dietary habits, other care you may have had (chiropractic, osteopathic, medical, etc.), your job, and other questions designed to help determine the nature of your illness and the best way to go about treating the problem.

A physical examination will be performed in accordance with your DC's clinical judgement, which may include x-rays, laboratory analysis and other diagnostic procedures. In addition, a careful spinal examination and analysis will be performed to detect any structural abnormalities which may be affecting or causing your condition. All of these elements are important components of your total health profile, and vital to the doctor of chiropractic in evaluating your problem.

An "adjustment," as doctors of chiropractic use the term, means the specific manipulation of vertebrae which have abnormal movement patterns or fail to function normally. Doctors of chiropractic spend years learning motion palpation (the art of examining by movement or touch) and other forms of spinal examining procedures, so that they can administer specific and appropriate spinal adjustments.

Once the DC has identified the problem, he/she will begin care by way of these adjustments or "manipulations." Particular attention will be paid to that area of your spine where a spinal derangement or "subluxation" has been detected. The adjustment is usually given by hand or "activator" type instruments, and consists of applying pressure to the areas of the spine that are out of alignment or that do not move properly within their normal range of motion.

Doctors of chiropractic use many sophisticated and varied techniques, and the specific procedure to be used will be determined and explained completely to you following a careful evaluation of your radiographs and physical findings.

Under normal circumstances, adjustments don't hurt. The patient may experience a minor amount of discomfort during the adjustment which lasts only seconds. Adjustments or manipulations are extremely safe. The risk factor is estimated to be in excess of 1 million to 1.