

COWIN CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC

www.chirocwin.com.au

In attendance:
Robert Cowin, D.C.
Julie Rodgers, Chiropractic Assistant



NEWSLETTER No. 8

FEBRUARY 2011

LIFE AFTER 40

By Bronwyn Jones



From an "overwhelming tiredness and despair" to a reliably maintained "state of wellbeing".

I am a Registered Nurse and have worked as one since I was 18 years old. I am now 51. Ten years ago I was struggling with a number of debilitating symptoms:

- lower back pain
- headaches ("head-in-a-vice")
- neck pain ("dragging-down")
- tight shoulders
- clicking jaw.

My work involved some of the common low-back

stresses such as sitting for long periods to interview people; moving heavy equipment, and bending my back forward at a constant angle when

collecting blood from donors.

By the end of a busy week I would be struggling with an overwhelming tiredness and would almost despair of ever again being free of pain.

Three of my colleagues at work had been to Cowin Chiropractic Clinic for back and shoulder problems and suggested I give it a go.

I must admit I was somewhat sceptical when they told me that treatment was an instrument which "tapped" the side of the head, but I liked the idea that I wouldn't have to have my neck "cracked". In the past a manipulative physiotherapist had cracked my neck manually and I did not enjoy the experience at all!



I embarked on my chiropractic treatment and in the 10 years since I have never looked back. The specialized upper-cervical tests and neck X-rays seemed logical and thorough, but slow. It wasn't till the fourth visit I had any treatment, a so-called "trial" adjustment. Then, improvement was quick. I had less-frequent bouts of neck and back pain even after long periods of sitting.

Each month saw further improvement and after six months, 17 visits and many Chinese-pillow sessions I was in very good health. My pains had become rare and manageable instead of continuing and overwhelming.

My jaw clicking has greatly diminished and I don't get that feeling of my head being in a vice.

Even after ten years, visits to the chiropractor continue to surprise me. For example, if I have a mild or severe discomfort in, say, my back or shoulder, I am still amazed that an adjustment to a different region, the upper-neck, can result in an improvement so big and immediate.

Even more surprising is the improvement that comes at visits when I am already feeling good, with no sense of being tense. I go from good to better. Straight away, the adjustment increases my feeling of relaxation in the head, neck, shoulders and back. Then, each day for the next few days I feel even more relaxed before settling into a very good state, usually, for some weeks.

My most common symptom now is occasional tightness of the neck and shoulders. If I do have a headache or an episode of severe back pain and spasms it is usually a sign that I have "lost my adjustment".

After experimenting with various intervals between chiropractic visits, ranging from two to ten weeks, I find that four-week intervals work best in helping me keep an optimal state of wellbeing and motivation.

Also, over the last year I have lost weight and been attending "boot camp". Feeling fit, energized and happy, I am continually grateful to upper-cervical chiropractic.

Yes, there is life after 40!!!



A KNIFE-LIKE PAIN

By Fran Samaras

My first back pain was sudden and severe. I managed to walk a few steps and then collapsed.

I had had no warning and no previous experience. Up until the age of 47, my back had been pain-free.

Then one morning in 1985 while clearing the table I leant forward to pick up the salt shaker and felt something "give way" in my lower back. I recovered enough to get around but was left with a knife-like pain in my upper back that didn't go away.



"At 72 years of age I want to maintain my mobility and health for as long as possible and to be able to care for myself and my husband."

Just doing the washing up or bending backwards or walking too much would set it off. I felt fragile and unsafe: fearful that any ordinary movement could suddenly increase the pain.

Eventually, on the recommendation of a friend of my sister Jan, I sought help from upper-cervical chiropractor Kathleen Bras, D.C. After some tests and X-rays, she said she thought that my back pain was coming from my neck.

That surprised me but the questions asked about prior accidents, etc., prompted me to remember being heavily dumped while surfing thirty years earlier and of having been unable to get up or move for some time after.

It seems that she was right. Straight after the first neck adjustment my back pain went away for two days. After the second adjustment it went away for seven days.

I felt safer, no fragility at all. Then, still cautious, I tested myself with five minutes of weeding the garden and had no pain. I know it was because the chiropractor had selected the right treatment, but to me it really felt like a miracle.

Gradually the upper-neck adjustments along with using the Chinese pillow, sometimes several times a day, extended my periods of wellbeing from 2 days to 7 to 14 to 28. In the 25 years since then I have experienced a number of "indicator symptoms" from time to time that apparently came via my neck and which were happily relieved by a neck adjustment. They included:

- extreme fatigue,
- migraine headaches with flashing lights ("aura"),
- non-migraine "claw-type" headaches as if strong fingers were pressing into the top of my head,
- stiff neck,
- pain in the hip, and
- sharp pain in my upper right arm,

Nowadays, I continue a four-weekly regime of chiropractic adjustments to maintain my health. If the interval is longer, I begin to develop one or another of the above "indicator symptoms". Keeping in mind the necessity to do my own part in my treatment, i.e., Chinese-pillow rests, exercise (preferably Feldenkrais) and being alert to "indicator symptoms", my whole experience with upper-cervical chiropractic has been very positive for the past quarter of a century.

SELF-HELP, HUBBY-HELP and CHIRO-HELP

By June Armessen



"Life is too short to live with unnecessary pain".

Ten years ago I was having a season of overwhelming back pains. Eventually, I went to a chiropractor. He said the back pain may be coming from the neck. That seemed possible. I had had two motor-vehicle accidents in the previous 10 years. Apparently, the neck corrections (adjustments) are supposed to let the body reorganise its loads from head to toe so that twists and strains lower down in the back can be relieved. It worked for me. The neck was adjusted and my back-pain season ended.

Now my chiropractor has asked me to look back over the years and offer any comments or insights that might be helpful to other sufferers. Wow! What can I say? Regularly I am surprised and grateful get relief from pain.

Probably, the most important thing is that I have had some problems and learnt some solutions. Examples:

1. One of my hobbies was camping and 4-wheel driving. On one of those trips I woke to find my neck and back in severe pain. I went back to the chiropractor and once again an upper-neck adjustment relieved the pain. **Problem solved.**

2. I have come to recognise that lying on the floor resting on the Chinese pillow is all that is needed to get rid of some pains. However, after two knee replacements this year, getting up and down from the floor was out of the question. It was good to learn there was an alternative: lying on a bed with a board under the backside for hardness and two or three pillows under the legs. It proved just as effective for me. **Problem solved.**



3. I also have come to recognise when an adjustment is needed and nothing else will do. After my knee operation the flight of stairs to the chiropractic clinic proved difficult. It was a bit of a surprise, but going up and down was a breeze after the adjustment. The knees felt stronger and safer. **Problem solved.**
4. I have found that light exercise helps to maintain my adjustment but vacuuming and ironing still give me grief. So I have trained my husband. **Problem solved.**



Nowadays I camp less and spend more time with our grandchildren, for example, at the beach. That tests my adjustments. Also, I sit on a "fit ball" when sitting at the computer to prevent a collapsed posture.

Life is too short to live with unnecessary pain and I am pleased to have solved some pain problems by regular self-help, hubby-help and chiro-help.

CHIROPRACTOR'S COMMENTS:

Chiropractic Adjusting Instruments:

The electrical solenoid adjusting instrument described in the patients' stories above is a hybrid of Pettibon & Sweat components, with an adjusting head supplied by Jeffrey Blanchard. It has a long history.

In 1901 (110 years ago), Thomas Storey "while still a student, devised a mallet and wedge to adjust cervical vertebrae"¹ (neck bones). Then, according to Kyneur & Bolton² by around 1910 Alva Gregory was advertising an electrical adjusting instrument capable of delivering from about five to 60 percussions a second. In 1948, Arden Zimmerman, a chiropractor and an engineer, developed a percussion instrument driven by compressed air and designed specifically for the upper-neck. Since the 1960's, many developers, notably Burl & Grover Pettibon, Don Harrison and Roy Sweat have continued to refine upper-cervical adjusting instruments.

In 1969, Robert Cowin and Kathleen Bras moved the contact points for the percussions from the upper neck to the lower skull (squamous or mastoid parts of the temporal bone) so that a light (four-pound), vectored force could be directed to the upper-most neck bone (atlas vertebra) even when it was "shielded" by a low-projecting mastoid process.³ Since then, all our patients have received this type of adjustment. R.C.

1. Chance M A, Peters R E. A Quest for Better Questions. Chiropr J Aust 1991; 21:179.
2. Kyneur J S, Bolton S P. Chiropractic Equipment. In: Peterson D, Wiese G, editors. Chiropractic: an illustrated history. St Louis: Mosby-Year Book; 1995: 275-77.
3. Aldis G K, Hill J M. Analysis of a chiropractor's data. Journal of Proceedings, Royal Society of NSW 1979; 112-93-9.

NEWSLETTERS IN PLANNING STAGES:

March or April 2011

Chiropractic and polio.

Part 1: Then. It mattered to them.

June or July 2011

Chiropractic and polio.

Part 2: Now. It matters to us.