



# Family Chiropractic

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## CHIROPRACTIC HEALTH CARE

**WHAT IS IT?** Chiropractic is a form of health care, which focuses on the proper alignment of the spine and the normal functioning of the nervous system. Chiropractic health care stresses that “wellness” is more than being symptom-free. Wellness is based on working to achieve and maintain health rather than on treating disease. Chiropractic is concerned with your total health and includes a focus on nutrition, exercise, rest and handling of stress along with regular spinal care.

**HOW DOES IT WORK?** When a health care problem does arise, chiropractic believes that it is imperative to identify the underlying cause of the problem—not just to treat the symptoms. To do this, a thorough examination is made of your spine to determine if a subluxation (also called a misalignment) is present. A subluxation of the spine can occur at any time and at any level of the spine from the neck down to the tailbone. You may not even be aware that a misalignment exists. It is detected through finding spinal fixation or loss of normal motion. A misalignment is a portion of the spine (vertebra) that is out of proper position. A misalignment places stress on the nerve root in the affected region, This causes an irritation of the nerve root, which may produce malfunctions in the body. Because each nerve root governs the functioning of a wide area of the body, the malfunction may produce symptoms in the related muscles, glands, organs and other body tissues of that area.

**WHAT DOES IT DO?** The goal of chiropractic treatment is to identify and correct misalignment of the spine. This will relieve the pressure on the involved nerve root. The restoration of the proper nerve supply to the affected area will relieve the symptoms and allow the normal functioning to be re-established. The primary method of treatment to achieve this goal is the manual manipulation (adjustment) of the spine by the chiropractor. A great deal of skill, knowledge, and dexterity are needed to apply the sophisticated and varied techniques of adjustment, which are employed in the field of chiropractic today. The number and frequency of adjustments required varies with the location, type and severity of the problem. Symptom-relief may not signify the completion of treatment. Remember that chiropractic focuses on treating the underlying condition, which caused the problem—not just eliminating the symptoms. Therefore, further adjustments may be necessary to fully restore and maintain your optimal level of health.

**WHAT IS MY PART?** In choosing chiropractic, you are choosing to take an active role in your health care. During your visits, the doctor will conduct thorough examinations and testing to identify your health problem. He will explain his findings to you in detail. It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand. Ask for clarification if you are uncertain or unclear. The doctor will prescribe specific therapies and a treatment schedule. It is imperative that you follow the prescribed schedule. Skipping appointments only slows down your progress. In some cases, the doctor may determine that additional testing (MRI, CT scan, EMG) or referral to another physician (neurologist, orthopedist, internist) is necessary. It is important for you to follow through with these referrals. Other forms of treatment which may be recommended include nutrition counseling, massage therapy, exercise instruction, and rehabilitation therapy. The doctor will individually select the most appropriate and expedient course of treatment for you. Your responsibility is to take advantage of all of the indicated resources, which would be of help.

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### SPRINGFIELD

8440 Old Keene Mill Road  
Springfield, VA 22152  
703-569-1300 / Fax 569-1972