



Orpington Chiropractic Clinic

Spinal Column



8-10 High St. Orpington

tel. 01689 873130

March 2008

Ben Harris joins OCC

We are delighted to welcome Ben to our team as the new chiropractor. Ben has been working at a clinic in Cardiff for the last 3 years and has developed a wide range of interests and skills in that time, however his passions for treating rugby and volleyball players remains at the fore.

Ben's interest in chiropractic came from his mother having had treatment for severe headaches — *ironically following her son's delivery!*

Ben is a delightfully enthusiastic individual and is bound to become very popular within the clinic, with both his patients and his colleagues. This has certainly proven to be the case since he started with us.

His skills extend far beyond clinical expertise as he is also a competent drummer and singer — though we don't expect these areas to be overly taxed in his work with patients.

Nonetheless you have been warned!!

Just a thought... "Cats always land on their feet - but dogs won't even let you throw them!"

Sciatica

Sciatica is associated with pain, numbness, and muscle weakness in the hip, buttock, leg, calf, and foot. The sciatic nerve is the longest and largest of all the body's nerves. It runs from the spinal column near the pelvis down each leg and can be as wide as your thumb. Each sciatic nerve is made up of five smaller nerves that branch into the thigh, knee, calf, ankle, and foot. Sciatica occurs when this nerve is compressed, irritated, or inflamed.

Sciatica is most commonly a result of a misaligned lower spine that is pinching the root of the sciatic nerve. This malfunction can apply a good deal of pressure on the sciatic nerve and cause severe pain. A faulty pelvic alignment could put the gluteal muscles under duress and the sciatic nerve will be pinched as it passes



through the buttocks. A bulging or herniated disc is another cause of sciatica and is usually a result of trauma from a fall or accident. Less commonly noted causes would include arthritis, diabetes, vitamin deficiencies, and any degeneration as a result from long-term stress on the lower back. Often traumatic events are not the cause of sciatica. Standing, sitting, walking, running, heavy lifting, bending, twisting, or even sneezing can bring on symptoms.

Sciatica is characterized by pain, numbness, and weakness in the lower extremities. Commonly pain and numbness are located at the calf, foot, or back of the thigh. This is usually preceded for a few weeks by lower back pain. Eventually the leg pain becomes worse than the back pain. Pain can either be dull and aching or can be a shooting pain down the leg all the way to the toes. This pain can last for several days or weeks or it can

subside for even a few hours. However, someone who has had sciatica for a long period of time will find that the pain localises in the buttock and thigh. In severe cases it can damage nerves and reflexes or cause the calf muscle to deteriorate. Occasionally, paraesthesias (tingling) and weakened bladder function can accompany sciatica.

Many times people with sciatica wait until the pain becomes unbearable before they contact the chiropractor. Waiting can cause long-term damage. It is important that you contact your chiropractor when the pain originally begins. A number of treatments for sciatica can be prescribed (that don't include surgery or medications) to help with your sciatica. The first thing your chiropractor will do is review your complete medical history to determine when the problem began and the possible causes. Then a complete physical and chiropractic exam is performed, and x-rays may be taken. Your chiropractor will review and discuss the results with you and make recommendations for treatment of sciatica.

Sometimes, a chiropractor will find the source of the nerve irritation and use manual adjustments to correct the spinal misalignment. The adjustments are designed to remove the irritation that is pinching the sciatic nerve and causing the pain. Massage therapy may be used to reduce muscle spasms. Ultrasound and ice therapies are also used to relieve the symptoms of sciatica. Pain medications merely mask the symptoms and never heal the cause, and surgery should always be the last resort. In most cases of patients who have received spinal manipulations, x-rays taken after sciatica treatment have shown improvement in the spinal alignment as well as a reduction of symptoms. Chiropractic care works, so contact a Chiropractor today if you experience any of the symptoms of sciatica.

Remember —
red meat isn't *really* all that bad for you, it's the green meat you need to worry about!

CHIROPRACTIC & SPINAL RESEARCH

“Do you know anyone living on prescription drugs? They may have years of uncorrected problems in their body. Please tell them about chiropractic.”

People who show imbalances in leg length are less healthy. - A common finding in people with spinal problems is that one leg appears longer than the other. This is called leg-length inequality. But does it really matter?

In a recent study, fifty-five volunteers were given the SF-12 health questionnaire which measures health-related quality of life. The volunteers were then examined by a chiropractor for leg length alignment. The results were compared with their quality of life questionnaires. Those people with leg length differences had significantly lower scores on the quality of life questionnaire than those without leg length differences.

People with leg length differences experienced lower scores in the mental health component than the physical. The mental component measured depression, stress and life satisfaction. Chiropractors can balance out the spine and structural system bringing your legs back into balance and help reduce all these problems.

Bye – see you next issue. Want copies of this newsletter for your friends? Please feel free to share this with them. Please remember that everyone needs to be free from problems, so bring your friends and loved ones for a free spine check!

£15 New Patient fee!
 - normally £45 - £83!

Your family & friends can get a reduction in the cost of their initial consultation fee from up to the 21st March 2008 (*including any xray fees*) only with this voucher.

Please give this to someone you think may benefit from chiropractic care!

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