

■ Report: Spinal arthritis begins within two weeks of joint immobility

Spinal Pathophysiology refers to the osteoarthritic degenerative changes that occur in a spine that has lost its normal range of motion. The journal *Clinical Biomechanics* reported as far back as 1987 (issue 2:223-229) that joint immobility, such as that which occurs in the Vertebral Subluxation Complex, can lead to permanent damage in as little as two weeks.

According to T. Videman, author of the study, "The evidence in this review shows that immobilizing healthy joints in experimental animals can lead inexorably to osteoarthritis. With respect to [human] patients, it can be postulated that immobilization, for whatever cause, will initiate a pathogenic [disease producing] chain of musculo-skeletal degenerative changes."

And the joints don't have to be stuck for a single long period, either. A joint immobilized one day a week for 14 weeks shows the same amount of damage as one immobilized for 14 days in a row. The damage accumulates over **all** the time the joint was immobilized.

How does this relate to Chiropractic? When a spinal subluxation occurs, the joints become stuck or immobile, unable to move in their normal range of motion and the degenerative process known as osteoarthritis begins. According to Videman, if this immobility is not corrected within two weeks, the osteoarthritis becomes permanent. These permanent changes can't be reversed but they can be kept from getting worse by restoring the mobility to the stuck joint. This is one reason why a lifetime of Chiropractic Wellness Care is so important.

If permanent spinal damage can occur within two weeks of a vertebra subluxating, when do you want to get it adjusted? As soon as possible. How do you know if you have a subluxation? Visit your chiropractor.

Many times people wait until they hurt to get their spine adjusted. By the time the pain from a subluxation shows up, it may have been there for months or even years. Once a week visits to your chiropractor to correct subluxations before they lead to permanent damage makes sense to us. ▲

■ Chiropractic most popular, helpful wellness discipline for arthritis patients

The September 21, 1999 issue of *The Annals of Internal Medicine* reports that chiropractic is the most popular and by far the most effective of the wellness disciplines (also known as CAM or Complementary and Alternative Medicine) for patients suffering from rheumatologic diseases such as arthritis and fibromyalgia.

In the study, 63% of patients who went to a rheumatologist also took advantage of the wellness disciplines. 31% of those patients tried chiropractic care at least once.

73% of the patients who began chiropractic care found it useful. The rest of the wellness disciplines (copper bracelets, magnets, diet supplements, etc.) were found to be helpful by less than 50% of the people who tried them. 63% of the arthritis patients in this study reported that they used the Wellness Disciplines at least once and more than 90% of them were using them on a regular basis.

Interestingly enough, only 45% of the patients who tried the wellness disciplines told their rheumatologist although 71% of the doctors said that it was OK for their patients to do so.

The reasons the patients gave for incorporating the wellness disciplines into their treatment plan were: to alleviate their pain, their medication wasn't working, they heard it helped someone else and it's safe.

By way of commentary, it's no surprise that arthritis patients experience such good results from chiropractic care. Chiropractic Wellness Care helps your body work the best it possibly can by removing interferences to your nervous system. Your nervous system controls your body's ability to repair and maintain itself in a healthy state. Interferences to your nervous system can cause functional disorders that eventually lead to diseases such as arthritis. ▲

■ Nitroglycerine use increases likelihood of hip arthritis

A report presented to the Annual Meeting of the *American College of Rheumatology* in November, 1999 finds that women over 65, who take nitroglycerin for chest pain, are more likely to develop osteoarthritis of the hip.

9,000 women over 65 who took nitroglycerin daily had 2.5 to 3 times more osteoarthritis than those of the same age who didn't.

According to the lead researcher, Dr. Nancy Lane of the University of California, San Francisco, "when you double or triple the risk, we begin to think it's clinically important."

■ Vioxx linked to blood clots, heart attacks and strokes

Reuters news service reported on April 19, 2002 that sales of the arthritis drug Vioxx are down because the drug has been linked to blood clots that can cause heart attacks and stroke. Vioxx is produced by the drug manufacturer Merck & Co.

Last year, Vioxx revenue fell nearly \$1 billion short of initial projections because of concerns that patients taking the drug develop blood clots that can cause heart attacks and stroke. An August, 2001 study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the class of drugs known as COX-2 inhibitor drugs, which includes Vioxx, Celebrex and Bextra, increased the risk of heart attack, stroke and other cardiovascular problems.

Commentary: Over and over again we hear of new “miracle” drugs that end up causing more problems that are more dangerous than the disease they are supposed to treat. Taking drugs does nothing to allow the highest expression of health. Making sure your body is functioning at its highest potential possible with Chiropractic wellness care is the best way to get and stay healthy.



Arthritis Drug Remicade Raises Risk For Lymphoma

The Associated Press reported on October 7, 2004 that the maker of the arthritis drug Remicade sent out a letter warning doctors that patients taking the drug developed the cancer lymphoma at a rate three times higher than the general public.

The company, Centocor, is a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, headquartered in Malvern, Pennsylvania. Working with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centocor revised the label of Remicade to reflect the lymphoma risk.

It was the second label change the company has had to make for Remicade in the last six weeks. In August of 2004 the company warned that people taking Remicade for rheumatoid arthritis and Crohn's disease can experience fatal central nervous system and blood disorders.



FDA Adds Warning To Arthritis Drug Bextra

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced on December 9, 2004 that the arthritis painkiller Bextra will now come with a new warning about the possibility of people using the drug developing blood clots and heart attacks.

The drug's maker, Pfizer, studied more than 1500 heart bypass patients who were given the drug after their surgery. It was discovered that the patients who took Bextra for pain were more likely to have strokes, heart attacks and blood clots in the legs or lungs than patients who took a placebo.

Bextra has not been approved for use in bypass patients and the new warning urges doctors not to use it in that setting.

Bextra also gets a new black box warning about the possibility of a potentially fatal skin reaction. As of November, 2004, the FDA had received 87 reports of patients experiencing skin reactions. 36 of the 87 were hospitalized and four of them died.

Bextra is in the same class of drugs as the drug Vioxx, which was taken off the market in September, 2004. Vioxx was banned because studies showed that it doubled the chances of strokes and heart attacks if used for more than 18 months.