

**FREE!!**  
PLEASE TAKE ONE

# YOUR CHIROPRACTOR



MAY / JUNE 2015

## GM SPINAL CLINIC

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**CLINIC HOURS:**  
**Monday to Friday** 8.00am–7.00pm  
**Saturday** By appointment

Your health is our concern but your responsibility. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let the clinic know as soon as possible, and be sure to make up your missed appointment.



**Members:**  
Chiropractor's  
Association of  
Australia

## BEDTIME BLISS....OR BLUES?

Have you struggled to find the perfect mattress that is both comfortable and provides adequate support? How many times have you woken tired and stiff from a poor night's sleep? Many people are needlessly suffering from disrupted sleep due to their mattress. Continuing to sleep on a bed that doesn't support your body properly is a common cause of neck and back problems and can have a significant impact on both the quality and duration of sleep, leading to chronic tiredness and other health problems.

Fortunately, there are a number of things that can be done to ensure your bed is not going to get in the way of you getting a healthy night's sleep. Chiropractors advocate finding a mattress that's designed to conform to the spine's natural curve and distribute pressure evenly across the body. However, everyone's spines are different so you must find the best option for you. Lie on the mattress in your normal sleeping position and have someone observe whether your spine remains fairly neutral. If your spine is obviously sagging or curved exaggeratedly in any given direction,

then keep searching for a mattress that helps maintain neutral spine alignment. While researchers are challenging the idea that a firm mattress is absolute for anyone with back pain, most experts still agree that a saggy mattress is not a good choice. Remember Goldilocks and the three bears? Not too hard, not too soft....but just right!

One of the other common mistakes people make is that they keep the same mattress for too many years. They do wear out and need to be replaced eventually to ensure your body is supported properly. As a general rule, a mattress should last around eight years but if you are starting to have difficulties sleeping then look to upgrade sooner.

The choice in mattresses today is vast. The newer designs and materials may offer an advantage for some people giving greater support. However, they can be a significant initial investment so take your time in selecting the correct mattress for you and ask your Chiropractor if you need further advice.



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# IT'S JUST GROWING PAINS...

Growing pains are cramping, achy muscle leg pains that may start as early as age three or four and may also reoccur later on towards the adolescent years. This type of pain often occurs in the late afternoon or evening and it may even cause children to wake up crying in the night which can be very distressing. It is now thought that they are not actually linked to growth spurts (as once believed) and that they appear to be more common after intensive physical activity or sports. Growing pains can be experienced for months or even years but eventually they will subside.

Children can be so resilient and often it's one bang or knock after the other! However, it is important to be aware of the sources of on-going physical stress to a child's spine. Heavy backpacks and long periods of sitting and slouching are a serious concern as they can place additional pressure on the developing spine and body. This can then lead on to ongoing health problems as the body struggles to function effectively.

Good posture is a key part of maintaining good spinal health and your family chiropractor will be able to advise you on ways to improve your and your family's posture to ensure you all have a healthier spine and improved overall health and wellbeing. Proper hydration is also vitally important to avoid muscle cramping and maintain electrolyte balance so it is critical



to ensure that all of your family members are drinking enough water throughout their day.

So, does that mean it's normal to have growing pains and we should just ignore them? The answer is absolutely not. Children

should not suffer from on-going pain and if they do, it should always be fully investigated. So often it gets brushed off as just 'growing pains' but discomfort in children can be a sign of a developmental or functional problem. In rare cases it can even indicate a more serious condition. Parents should make sure they take their child to their chiropractor for a check up to see if something is functionally or structurally amiss. Altered biomechanics and spinal misalignment, especially in the lower lumbar spine and pelvis, creates imbalances in the quadriceps, hamstring, and calf muscles, which may contribute to leg pain. Pelvic misalignment can lead to leg-length inequalities where the child is unevenly distributing his or her weight, placing additional stress and strain not only on the spine, but the feet, ankles, and knees as well.

Your chiropractor will fully assess your child's spine for areas that are not functioning properly and correct them using precise spinal adjustments. A chiropractic adjustment restores nerve system function and your child's whole body benefits. Often this is all that is required but your chiropractor will refer to the most appropriate healthcare provider if they suspect something more serious may be occurring. If your child is complaining of pain or discomfort that is not resolving it is important to get them checked as soon as possible.

## DO DISC'S ACTUALLY SLIP?

The spine is made up of the vertebrae (the bones), which have cartilage discs between them. Discs have a tough, fibrous outer membrane with a central gel-like core. They make the spine flexible and at the same time act as shock absorbers.

The discs are firmly fixed between the vertebrae and are held in place by ligaments. There is very little room for discs to slip. If you've been diagnosed with a slipped disc, you might have imagined a disc slipping completely out of place in your spine, but this is not the case. The term 'slipped disc' does not really describe the process properly – the disc does not actually slip, but it can bulge or herniate.

Over time, the outer fibers of the disc deteriorate due to normal wear and tear. Under stress, a disc's inner material may swell resulting in a disc bulge. If the material pushes through the outer membrane it is a disc herniation. The disc material can injure the spinal cord or the nerves that radiate from it and this can cause debilitating pain. However, not all discs bulges press on nerves, and it is possible to have distorted discs without any pain or discomfort which could lead to increased wear and tear on your spine. So, while discs don't technically 'slip', they can still cause significant issues, so make sure you take care of your spine today!

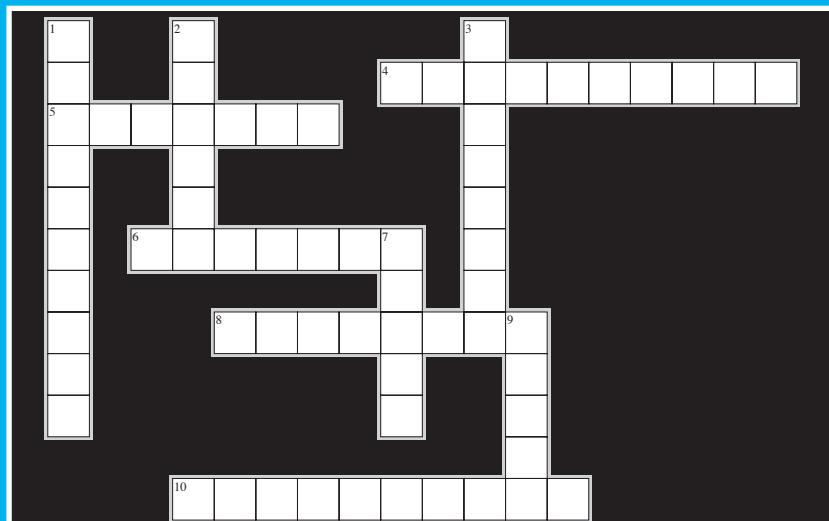
## Clever Crossword

### Across:

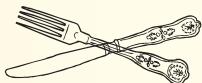
4. A fairy-tale heroine who enters the house of the Three Bears.
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ overload.
6. Muscle-to-bone connectors.
8. Olympics contestants are all \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Lying often involves them.

### Down:

1. The patient complained of \_\_\_\_\_ in the left calf.
2. It may be pulled or pumped.
3. Capable of bending easily without breaking.
7. What a new parent craves.
9. What a chiropractor manipulates.



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF YOUR CHIROPRACTOR. ANSWERS ARE SHOWN ON THE BACK PAGE.



## Good Health on the Menu

### KORMA LENTIL CURRY

**A delicious curry with a little bit of pulse.**

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1cm piece of ginger, grated
- 1 green chilli, sliced
- 2 tbsp korma curry paste
- 1 potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 cup small cauliflower pieces
- 1 large carrot diced
- 1 cup chopped string beans
- 150g chopped spinach leaves
- 1 ½ cups vegetable stock
- 1 tin coconut milk
- ½ cup fresh coriander
- 400g can brown lentils, drained and rinsed
- Low-fat plain yoghurt

#### Method

1. In a saucepan heat oil and sauté onions until translucent
2. Add garlic, ginger and chilli and cook for a further two minutes
3. Add korma paste and cook for a further two minutes
4. Add potatoes, cauliflower and carrot with the vegetable stock and coconut milk – cook for 20 minutes
5. Add string beans and spinach and cook for a further 10 minutes
6. Add lentils and cook for three minutes or until lentils are heated through
7. Turn off heat and garnish with fresh coriander
8. Serve with a small dollop of yoghurt



## SPRAIN VS STRAIN

Sprains and strains are injuries to the soft tissues of our musculoskeletal system and they are both very common. Soft tissues are the tissues that connect, support, or surround other structures and organs of the body, not being bone. Soft tissue includes tendons, ligaments, fascia, skin, fibrous tissues, fat, synovial membranes, muscles, nerves and blood vessels. Muscle and tendons are made from bundles of fibres and contain specialised cells that monitor the degree of contraction and stretch. With general use, muscles and tendons use soft contractions to resist overstretching. However, sudden twists or jolts can apply greater force than the tissue can tolerate. The fibres can be overstretched and tear leading to bleeding from broken blood vessels which results in swelling.

So is a sprain the same as a strain? Often these two words are used interchangeably but they are actually two quite different types of injuries:

### SPRAINS

Joints are held together and supported by tough bands of connective tissue called ligaments. Ligaments are tissues that connect bones at a joint. The entire joint is enclosed inside a membrane called a joint capsule which is filled with lubricating synovial fluid. This fluid helps to nourish the joint and provide extra cushioning against any impact received. A sprain is a joint injury that typically involves overstretching which causes small tears in the ligaments and joint

capsule. Falling, twisting, or getting hit can all cause a sprain with common sites for sprains including the thumb, ankle and wrist. Symptoms of sprains include pain, swelling, bruising, and being unable to move the involved joint. You might even feel or hear a pop or tear when the injury happens.

### STRAINS

A strain is a stretched or torn muscle or tendon. Tendons are the tissues that connect the muscles to the bones, allowing the controlled movement of the joints. Twisting or pulling of these tissues can cause a strain and these injuries can happen suddenly or develop over a period of time. Many people get strains playing sports with common sites for strains being the back, calf, groin and hamstring. Symptoms of strains include pain, muscle spasms, swelling, and trouble moving the muscle.

Both sprain and strain injuries can come on suddenly or may get worse gradually. A sudden injury is one that is related to a specific incident and is often called an acute soft tissue injury. This means it has occurred within the previous 24 to 72 hours. An injury that gets worse over time is often referred to as a chronic soft tissue injury. These are commonly caused by continued overuse or increases in normal tissue stress. Soft tissue injuries can take between two and twelve weeks to heal. The healing time is dependent

**LAUGHTER**  
is the best medicine

"Your body is the baggage you must carry through life. The more excess the baggage, the shorter the trip."

– Arnold H. Glasgow

"Take care of your body with steadfast fidelity. The soul must see through these eyes alone, and if they are dim, the whole world is clouded."

– Goethe

"The sovereign invigorator of the body is exercise, and of all the exercises walking is the best."

– Thomas Jefferson

"If I'd known I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself."

– Eubie Blake (*on his 100th birthday*)

How do two psychiatrists greet each other? – "You are fine, how am I?"



# CHIROPRACTIC FOR PERFORMANCE – THE LATEST RESEARCH

Most athletes have come to recognize chiro-practic care as an excellent injury prevention and treatment option. But beyond that, chiro-practic can provide many additional benefits that can boost performance naturally and can make a significant difference to their results.

The term "athlete" can be used for those individuals who participate in a sport on a regular basis, whether or not they are in it for serious competition, fitness or just weekend fun. Whether you are a top athlete or are working on integrating some healthy activity in your life, chiropractic care can help keep your spine balanced and your nerve system functioning at 100%, improving your performance dramatically.

New research into the effects of chiropractic care suggests that it may have an important role to play in maximising sporting performance as well as aid recovery from a range of conditions where muscle function has been compromised. The New Zealand College of Chiropractic's Centre for Chiropractic Research has recently published a study in the Experimental Brain Research Journal (1) which demonstrates that following a full spine chiropractic adjustment session there was an increase in the subjects' ability to contract one of their leg muscles. This is significant in regard to improving speed, co-ordination and agility which is beneficial regardless of whether you are seriously competing or just wanting to perform at your best.

Having a neurological system working at its absolute can allow greater strength, longer endurance, maintained focus, better balance and improved co-ordination. It will allow your body to reach the levels of performance that you are striving for. If you want the best out of your body physically it makes sense to give it the opportunity to reach its most optimal level of function.

## References:

- (1) Niazi IK, Türker KS, Flavel S, Kinget M, Duehr J & Haavik H. (2015) Changes in H-reflex and V waves following spinal manipulation. *Experimental Brain Research*. In press. DOI: 10.1007/s00221-014-4193-5



## IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE

Your sense of balance comes from several different systems working together to create stability for your body:

**Vision** – Sensory information from your eyes. Your vision helps you see where your head and body are in relationship to the world around you and to sense motion between you and your environment.

**Proprioception** – Special sensors sensitive to stretch or pressure in your muscles, tendons, and joints help your brain to know how your feet and legs are positioned compared to the ground and where your head is in relation to your chest and shoulders.

**Vestibular system** – Balance organs in the inner ear tell the brain about the position of your head and its various movements.

**Brain stem** – The brain stem receives all of this sensory information as well as additional information from other parts of the brain and puts it all together.

**Motor output** – Once your brain stem sorts out all of this information, it sends messages to the eyes and other parts of your body to move in a way that will help you keep your balance as well as have clear vision while you are moving.

If you feel off balance or dizzy, it can indicate that one of these systems may not be working correctly. Your Chiropractor can help to determine how you are using your balance systems and through adjusting your spine may improve how your body uses all that information together. A chiropractic adjustment reconnects the brain and body, restoring the communication pathways and allowing your body to receive and use the information it needs more effectively.

## PRACTICE UPDATE

### ON ARRIVAL AT CLINIC

Please see the receptionist upon arrival. This eliminates the possibility of you being overlooked and enables us to have your information ready.

### APPOINTMENTS

Your appointment schedule is designed specifically to obtain the best possible results. Please be sure to make up any missed appointments.

Should you wish to change an appointment, we would appreciate as much notice as possible so that other patients can be offered your time.

### PHONE CALLS

Chiropractors in this practice may be contacted by phone during office hours. A message will be taken if the Chiropractor is with another patient and your call will be returned when the Chiropractor is available.

### FEEDBACK

We are here to serve you. Please speak to your chiropractor or the staff about any concerns you may have.

We see your constructive comments as helping us to help you and others.

### WAITING TIMES

Despite our best intentions, we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected urgent attention.

Be assured that when it comes your turn the chiropractor will not rush to catch up but will give your problem the time it deserves. Thank you for your consideration.

### HEALTHY HINTS

EAT fish twice a week.

DRINK at least a litre of water a day.

WALK, swim or cycle for 20 minutes three times a week.

THEN.... you'll feel better!

Down: 1. Discomfort; 2. Muscle; 3. Flexible; 7. Sleep; 9. Spine.

Across: 4. Goldilocks; 5. Sensitive; 6. Tendons; 8. Athletes; 10. Mattresses.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD