

Chiropractic and Infertility

By Dr. Ken Spresser

Chiropractic is the method of healing, advocating, non-surgical, noninvasive and drugless treatment of patients. The professional literature has shown that chiropractic works... it has been proven scientifically, however, there are many clinical anecdotes yet to be studied. The doctor of chiropractic focuses on spinal health as the key to overall health and wellness.

Chiropractors believe that the nervous system with its components housed in bone (skull and vertebrae) plays a primary role in the health of the whole body. Structural abnormalities in the spine cause pain, dysfunction (organic and non-organic) and loss of mobility.

A chiropractor performs spinal manipulation also known as vertebral adjustment as the primary treatment for spinal misalignment also known as subluxation. An adjustment is the skillful maneuver whereby the chiropractor applies pressure to the area of the spine that is out of adjustment. Ninety-four percent (94%) of manipulation in the United States is performed by chiropractors. The result is resolution of pain and inflammation with restored function.

Chiropractic doctors provide exercise guidance, counseling on activities of daily living, nutritional advice and rehabilitation.

Pelvic pain and organic dysfunction have varied symptoms which include inguinal or sprapubic pelvic pain; miscarriage; vaginal spotting; vaginal discharge; menstrual migraines; urinary frequency, urgency, dribbling, incontinence, sluggishness, retention, nocturia, dysuria, infection, loss of ability to perceive vesicle filling; prostatovesiculitis; impotence; decreased genital sensitivity; anorgasm; dispareuria, deficient precoital lubrication, pelvic pain

during orgasm; constipation; diarrhea; excessive flatus; anal sphincter spasm; encopresis; spontaneous bowel discharge, proctalgia and the loss of ability to perceive rectal filling. (Browning 1989; Herlin, 1966; Emmett, 1966, 1971; Rosomoff, 1963, 1970; Amelar, 1971; Shafer, 1969; Mosdol, 1979; Ross, 1971; Mallock, 1965; Yaxley, 1966) These symptoms can cause functional disorders of the bladder, bowel, gynecologic, and sexual dysfunction.

Conspicuously absent from the list above is infertility because infertility is the end result of the probable symptoms above that lead to a gynecological or sexual dysfunction. The professional literature has no references about the effect of manipulation on infertility.

Previous reports (Browning 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990) demonstrate that when manipulative decompression treatments are directed at the lower lumbar spine in patients with bladder, bowel, gynecologic, and sexual dysfunction, in whom clinical evidence of lower sacral nerve root or compression can be identified, the associated symptoms usually resolve. The key is the sacral nerves particularly the splanchnic nerves which are extensively distributed to structures located throughout the pelvis. (Warwick, 1973) The doctor of chiropractic can establish by digital examination whether there is lower sacral nerve compression. Usually this is accomplished by provoking pain upon deep external palpation and by the straight leg raise test. Organic dysfunction is not the forte of the chiropractic and should be medically ruled out.

Chiropractic manipulation is certainly a cost effective possibility as a solution to mechanically induced pelvic pain and organic dysfunction, which is one cause of infertility.

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