

Beating Addiction - Chiropractic

Emotions are not just felt in your head, but in your spine as well.

In a randomized clinical trial with 98 addicts designed by Robert Duncan, Ph.D., biostatistician at the University of Miami School of Medicine, Dr. Holder found that daily chiropractic adjustments five times a week over a 30-day period increased the retention rate to 100%. “This is unheard of; it’s never happened before in addiction treatment,” Dr. Holder says. At a national average of only \$40 per chiropractic adjustment, this rate of success costs only about \$800 per month. Add to this \$50 for a one-month’s supply of **amino acids** and \$240-\$400 a month for four addiction counseling sessions, and you have a total program cost of \$1,100 to \$1,250. John’s previously unsuccessful treatment, by comparison, cost his family \$16,000 a month.

John’s parents saw the results but couldn’t understand how chiropractic could have achieved them. Dr. Holder explains, “Simply put, addiction is compulsive use of a chemical or activity in spite of negative consequences.” You keep using a substance even though you know it’s bad for you. There are five types of addiction, including work, food, sex, drugs, chemicals, and gambling, and each one has many factors. “But these five categories are all variations of one disease—addiction.”

According to research reviewed by Dr. Holder, two key factors play a role in causing addictions. First, according to Kenneth Blum, Ph. D., of the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, there is genetic cause. Dr. Blum discovered the same genetic flaw (called “the A-1 allele of the D-2 dopamine receptor”) in 69% of severe alcoholics compared to only 20% of nonalcoholic people. Blum’s treatment, based on 30 years research, involves the use of amino acids to balance the brain reward cascade chemicals (called neurotransmitters) which are chronically deficient in the addicted person.

What’s the connection between a misaligned spine and addictions? It has to do with the interruption of a precise sequence of chemical changes in your brain called the “brain reward cascade.” If this cascade is not interrupted, you feel a sense of well-being and pleasure. If the sequence is interrupted, resulting in what is known as “reward deficiency syndrome,” you may seek mood-altering substances or activities. The brain chemicals known as neurotransmitters must be released in the right sequence, like falling dominoes, for you to feel good.

The biochemical end of the line is the release of dopamine; dopamine reward may be the biochemical secret to understanding addictions.

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How does a misalignment in your back interfere with the flow of chemicals in the brain? Holder's theory is that emotions and feelings are felt not just in your head, but in your spine as well.

If your spine is misaligned anywhere along its length, that condition can interfere with the proper operation of the limbic system and the flow of reward chemicals in your brain. Chiropractic gets the dopamine flowing again, balancing the brain reward cascade. Chiropractic offers the public something that conventional medicine cannot: a drug-free addiction treatment program.

Acupuncturists achieve excellent results in treating addictions but with only 7,000 for a population of 256 million, there are too few to go around. Most conventional doctors cannot successfully treat addictions because they are inadequately trained and tend to prescribe mood-altering drugs which only replace one substance with another and leave addicts at risk to relapse.

"Chiropractors, who number 50,000 in America today, are the logical primary intervention resource to deal with addiction," says Dr. Holder. How this daring claim plays out in the profession's next one hundred years remains to be seen. But nobody expects recovered addicts to argue the point.