

Chiropractic May Relieve Vertigo

Are you experiencing episodes of dizziness and a feeling that you, or objects surrounding you, are spinning? Did you know that chiropractic may be an effective treatment for this disorder? Read on to discover what causes vertigo, and how Dr. Christiana can help.

What is vertigo?

Despite the impression left on many by Alfred Hitchcock's film, *Vertigo*, the condition does not typically involve a fear of heights. Rather, Dr. Christiana explains that vertigo makes patients feel as if they are spinning when they are actually still - or that objects or the room are whirling around them. In addition, sufferers of vertigo often experience dizziness, nausea, hearing loss, ringing in the ears and loss of balance. One type of vertigo is triggered by positional changes, while others are sparked by certain activities, such as diving. This condition may be debilitating, since it impairs a patient's capacity to work, drive and engage in sports.

What causes vertigo?

Vertigo is associated with several disorders. It may be triggered by viral or bacterial infections in the inner ear, or ear conditions such as Meniere's syndrome. In other cases, vertigo results from an irritation of nervous tissue in the spinal cord, spinal region, brain or ear. Circulatory problems, including high or low blood pressure, may spawn vertigo by restricting blood flow to the brain. Other times, the condition is linked with motion sickness or psychological distress. Rarely, vertigo may signal a serious ailment, such as cancer, neurological problems or heart disease.

A prodigious number of medications - both prescription and over-the-counter - also cause vertigo. So, if you are taking any medication, tell Dr. Christiana immediately.

How does chiropractic alleviate vertigo?

Why is chiropractic so effective at relieving vertigo? Because this revolutionary approach goes to the root of the problem, rather than masking symptoms with drugs.

Many cases of vertigo are associated with a spinal condition called vertebral subluxation - areas in the spine where movement is restricted or bones (vertebrae) are misaligned. In cases of vertigo, this dysfunction occurs in the neck. Because the medical term for "neck" is "cervical," vertigo associated with vertebral subluxation is termed cervical vertigo (or cervicogenic vertigo).

Researchers speculate that vertebral subluxations interfere with nerve flow from the spinal cord to the brain and ear (J Can Chiro Assoc 1991; 35:89-94). Chiropractors hypothesize that this irritation triggers ear infections and impairs blood flow to the brain - the two conditions associated with most cases of vertigo.

And, scientific research supports the link between vertebral subluxation and vertigo (Man Med 1983; 1:1823). One analysis examined 50 patients with vertigo that was not caused by ear problems or neurologic disease. Of this group, 62% had spinal dysfunction in their upper neck (Eur Spine J 1998; 7:55-8). Another study found that 60% of patients with cervical vertigo who received chiropractic care in conjunction with conservative medical treatment enjoyed a complete remission of symptoms, and an additional 20% experienced consistent improvement (J Manipulative Physiol Ther 2000; 23:96100).

In some cases, vertigo is the sole symptom of vertebral subluxation. But, the vast majority of patients with cervical vertigo also suffer from neck, disorders, such as neck, shoulder and head pain; muscle ache; and stiffness. One study that enrolled 15 patients with cervical vertigo found that 93% of subjects suffered from neck complaints - usually for years prior to developing dizziness (J Manipulative Physiol Ther 2000; 23:96100).

Chiropractors correct vertebral subluxations with gentle maneuvers called chiropractic adjustments. Doctors of chiropractic spend years learning specialized adjusting techniques, which they custom-tailor for each individual patient. The result is an extremely effective protocol for alleviating spinal dysfunction and the conditions associated with it - including vertigo.

Chiropractic: a holistic approach

Chiropractors take a multifaceted, holistic approach to ending vertigo. As prevention specialists, doctors of chiropractic not only correct vertebral subluxations, but they also teach patients to ward off future spinal dysfunction. This prevention-oriented strategy often entails exercise, physiotherapy and ergonomic modifications. In cases of one specific type of vertigo triggered by certain postural positions, repositioning maneuvers and exercises may be advised.

Besides correcting and preventing vertebral subluxations, chiropractors may recommend adjunctive therapies to stave off vertigo. Supplements such as ginkgo biloba, garlic, cayenne and vitamin E increase blood flow to the brain, a possible trigger of dizziness. In addition, ginger eases nausea - while B-complex vitamins support optimal nervous system functioning.

Patients with vertigo should also take care to limit their sodium intake, since excessive dietary sodium is associated with inner ear problems.

Finally, balance-training techniques such as T'ai Chi, Pilates, Nia and yoga may hasten recovery. In one study, 22 patients with vertigo who learned T'ai Chi enjoyed a 10% boost in balance ability and significant reductions in dizziness and vertigo attacks.

Look to chiropractic for a drug-free solution to vertigo

If you suffer from dizziness, why turn to drugs with potentially hazardous side effects and questionable efficacy when an all-natural solution may be available? If you think that you may have vertigo, schedule a chiropractic evaluation to rule out the possibility of cervical vertigo. Chiropractors are experts at detecting the spinal dysfunction associated with this widespread - yet little known - condition.

If you do have cervical vertigo, chiropractic may be the solution you've been hoping for. However, if your symptoms are due to another type of vertigo, your doctor of chiropractic can help you determine what's provoking your dizziness - and refer you to an appropriate specialist.

Don't put your health on hold any longer - schedule an appointment for a chiropractic evaluation today!

**Our purpose is to educate and adjust families toward optimal health
with natural chiropractic care.**