Chiropractic Medicine’s Role in Pain Management for Cancer Patients

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Authors Conflicts of Interest;
– J. Sklar, No Conflict of Interest.

Objectives

• Attendee will become familiar with history of chiropractic integration into western medicine and applications of chiropractic care as it relates to pain associated with the side effects of cancer and cancer treatment
• Attendee will be able to identify patients who are candidates for chiropractic care
• Attendee will be able to recognize chiropractic modality or technique that will help address patient site of complaint
• Attendee will be able to identify contraindications for chiropractic care as it related to cancer patients
History of Chiropractic in Medical Settings

- Chiropractic acceptance into the allopathic paradigm
- Wilk vs. American Medical Association, 895 F.2d 352 (7th Cir. 1990)
- Over 25 years of Medicare Coverage
- Veterans Administration – at least 38 credentialed DCs nationwide in the VA system
  serving in salaried staff positions in 66 VA facilities
- American Academy of Hospital Chiropractors
- Medical schools include Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

Use of CAM by Cancer Patients On the Rise

- How many cancer patients use complementary and alternative medicine: a systematic review and metaanalysis.
- The use of complementary and alternative medical providers by insured cancer patients in Washington state
- Complementary/Alternative Medicine Use in a Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Implications for Oncology.

Literature Review

- Adjustments may lower blood pressure short term
- Increase in CD4 (T Cells) after adjustments
- Effectiveness of Chiropractic Manipulation in the Treatment of Headaches – a review of literature
- Exacerbations of chronic neck pain
- Easing Physical tension and emotional stress
- Autonomic Reflex Response
- Sympathetic Relaxation and Pain Reduction
- Chiropractic care for non-musculoskeletal conditions: a systematic review with implications for whole systems research
- The chiropractor's role in pain management for oncology patients.
  Source – Schneider J, Gilford S. Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, Camp Pendleton, CA, USA. JOSDC@aol.com
What the Literature Showed

• When it comes to cancer related pain and chiropractic care, more research is needed

Art of Healing

• “The art of healing comes from nature, not from the physician. Therefore the physician must start from nature, with an open mind.”

• Philipus Aureolus Paracelsus

Passion for Cancer Patients
Patient Centered Care and Pain

Core Concepts

- Dignity and Respect
- Information Sharing
- Participation
- Collaboration

Chiropractic’s Role

- The Chiropractor’s Role in Pain Management for Oncology Patients (Schneider and Gilford (2001)

  “The chiropractor provides noninvasive and non-pharmacologic options for decreasing pain and improving function.”
Chemotherapy Patients

- (Schneider and Gilford 2001 cont.)
- A possible side effect of certain chemical agents during chemotherapy is that of axonal neuropathy, potentially causing muscle weakness, leading to pronounced gait abnormalities.
- Approximately 80% of studied patients with colon, lung, and prostate cancer have related problems with ambulation.
- Weakness and deconditioning from fatigue, inactivity

Radiation Patients

- (Schneider and Gilford 2001 cont.)
- Radiation therapy on normal tissues can result in tissue fibrosis. Fibrosis potentially leads to a loss of mobility and/or painful movement.
- Chiropractic techniques are often of benefit in instances in which joint contracture or adhesions occur.
- Positioning necessities can cause musculoskeletal conditions to occur.

Significant Conclusions

- Schneider and Gilford 2001(cont.)
- Chiropractic care can enhance a cancer patient's quality of life at any stage in the disease process by decreasing pain and improving function.
- The chiropractor can assist in the treatment of the complications of prolonged bed rest, chronic pain related to radiation fibrosis, chemotherapy-related neuropathies and gait or functional abnormalities, thereby decreasing the patient's reliance on pain medication.
- The addition of a chiropractor to the rehabilitation team can improve the physical and emotional well-being of a patient with cancer.
Indications for Chiropractic

- Neck pain and stiffness
- Shoulder, knee, hip pain or stiffness
- Upper or lower extremity radiculopathy
- Generalized stiffness and difficult motion
- General wellness from de-stressing the musculoskeletal systems influence of the nervous system
- Joint pain from prolonged bedrest
- Low back pain and stiffness
- Headaches
- Sciatica
- Neuropathy
- Some visceral disorders including hiatal hernia, hiccups, nausea

No Chiropractic

- Primary bone cancer: no treatment within five spinal segments or to the affected extremity
- Unstable bone metastases: no treatment available within five spinal segments
- Cord compression from space occupying lesion
- Do not treat any extremity with a thrombosis
- Extreme low levels of platelet count (below 50k)

- An essential part of chiropractic treatment of a cancer patient is access to the most recent records: PET, CT, MRI, X-ray, blood work, etc.

Case Study AM-ERMC 1

Integrative Cancer Treatment: Sleep Disrupted by Ostomy Complicated by Neck, Upper Back and Shoulder Pain

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Cancer Treatment Centers of America® at Eastern Regional Medical Center
Sleep Disrupted by Ostomy Complicated by Cervical Radiculopathy

- Direct infusion for metastatic colon cancer
- Extensive surgery of liver resection, omentectomy and cholecystectomy
- Sleep became severely interrupted due to discomfort
- He developed radicular pain in the left side of his neck, radiating to scapula and deltoid
- Receiving chiropractic treatment, the patient was able to sleep through the night without the radicular pain in his neck, upper back and shoulder, as well as sit more comfortably during his chemotherapy

Case Study CD-ERMC4

Integrative Cancer Treatment: Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy

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Neuropathy (cont.)

- The patient described her symptoms as a feeling of her toes being taped together
- bottom of her feet feel like sandpaper when she walks
- sensory deficit component led to balance issues for the patient
- Chiropractic evaluation and treatment
Quality of Life

• Every moment of every day counts for patients and their loved ones

• Chiropractic has a role to keep people in motion with minimized pain and maximized function

“You must live in the present. Launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment. Fools stand on their island of opportunities and look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other life but this.”

—Henry David Thoreau
References


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Thank You!