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LET ME KNOW WHAT’S ON YOUR MIND: EDITORIAL@CHIROECO.COM

GENERATIONS X and Z WILL BE CAPACIOUS CONSUMERS of chiropractic care if the latest statistics continue trending for the always-online generations. Meanwhile CBD, in the wake of exploding consumer popularity and pressure on legislators to fully bring it to market, is getting fast-tracked for use in foods and drinks, which is currently illegal.

Back pain on the increase
Current patients can provide your best leads for new patients — especially the children of your current patients.

Back pain, specifically lower-back pain, is significantly on the increase for the current generation of children age 10-18, according to data presented at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

“The discomfort also appears to increase linearly with age (about 4% for each year of age),” reported Forbes magazine. “Text neck” also affects the back; since the human head generally weighs 10-12 pounds, when hunched over the phone the head can exert up to 60 pounds of pressure on the neck and back.

A new new-patient funnel
A study presented at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons meeting revealed that approximately 40% of participants experienced back pain in the previous year, and only half sought care. Of that number 34% sought chiropractic care.

Family members and children of patients remain the best source for new patients, as studies continue to reveal the large number of the population with back and neck ailments, and the small percentage of those that actually seek care.

Millions put into new CBD research
In late September nine research grants were announced by the U.S. government that will inject some $3 million (and potentially more) into CBD research to find out the extent of the marijuana derivative’s pain-relieving properties.

“The science is lagging behind the public use and interest. We’re doing our best to catch up here,” said Dr. David Shurtleff, deputy director of the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, which is funding the projects, speaking to the Associated Press.

Little research exists on CBD and its pain-relieving properties.

Human test subjects will be involved in only one of the grant projects, using brain scans with patients experiencing lower-back pain to see how CBD affects the brain and pain pathways. More human studies may reportedly be funded in a second round of grants.

The feds are now also growing their own product. The National Institute on Drug Abuse in July said it will grow roughly 4,500 pounds of marijuana at the University of Mississippi for research.

CBD getting fast-tracked
Also in late September, Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY), a chief proponent of a hemp legalization provision in the 2018 Farm Bill, asked the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to fast-track the lawful use of CBD from hemp in consumer goods including food items and dietary products.

The FDA had previously stated that allowing CBD to be sold in food items could take years to approve.

McConnell urged the FDA to come to terms with CBD and a path for lawful marketing of products by January 2020.

The VERDICT is in
The Palmer Center for Chiropractic Research is part of a $7 million study to address chronic low-back pain in U.S. veterans. In collaboration with the Yale Center for Medical Informatics, The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy & Clinical Practice, and the University of Iowa, the Palmer study is part of an $81 million federally-funded study called VERDICT, focusing on large scale clinical trials using non-drug pain management approaches. The study looks to answer real-world questions regarding chiropractic care for veterans moving forward.

Whether it’s a specialization in children, seniors or veterans, or considering new product offerings at your clinic, now is the time to begin planning for what should be a big 2020 in a largely post-opioid-epidemic U.S. seeking researched non-drug pain relief.

To your practice’s success,

Richard Vach
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Studies have found weight-bearing measurements are more reliable and clinically useful.1,2

Pathologies in structure and function are most apparent when the body is in the position of function (weight bearing).

During stance phase of the gait cycle, the foot supports the pelvis and spine.

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U.S. comptroller appoints chiropractor Christine Goertz as chair of PCORI Board

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) announced that ACA Senior Scientific Advisor Christine Goertz, DC, PhD, has been appointed by the comptroller of the United States to a three-year term as chair of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Board of Governors.

PCORI was established in 2010 as part of the Affordable Care Act to fund research to help patients, caregivers and their health practitioners make evidence-based, patient-centered health care decisions. Non-drug pain treatment is among PCORI’s top research priorities.

Goertz has been a member of the PCORI board since its establishment in 2010. She previously served in several leadership positions within the organization.

ChiroEco.com/goertz

Supplement provider recognized for leadership in naturopathic medicine

The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) has selected DaVinci Laboratories as the recipient of the “Corporation of the Year” award for outstanding service to the naturopathic medical profession. A provider of high-quality supplements to medical professionals and consumers, DaVinci received the award at the AANP 2019 Convention and Exhibition, held Aug. 15-17 in Portland, Ore.

“DaVinci Laboratories has an impressive history of leadership,” AANP Executive Director Laura Farr said. “Their enthusiastic support of the events, organizations and activities in the naturopathic industry is remarkable. They are a valued friend of the AANP and everyone with an interest in integrative medicine.”

ChiroEco.com/AANP-davinci

Why people gain weight as they get older

Many people struggle to keep their weight in check as they get older. A new research at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden has uncovered why that is: Lipid turnover in the fat tissue decreases during aging and makes it easier to gain weight, even if we don’t eat more or exercise less than before.

The study is published in the journal Nature Medicine.

The scientists studied the fat cells in 54 men and women over an average period of 13 years. In that time, all subjects, regardless of whether they gained or lost weight, showed decreases in lipid turnover in the fat tissue — that is the rate at which lipid (or fat) in the fat cells is removed and stored. Those who didn’t compensate for that by eating less calories gained weight by an average of 20 percent.

— Science Daily, sciencedaily.com

ChiroEco.com/gaining-weight

Focus on laser benefits, not features

You’ve probably heard of the marketing tactic of emphasizing benefits instead of listing a product’s features; unless you have a buyer who’s really into a product, talking about features will be more interesting to you and way less interesting to your buyer.

When people shop for a product, they want to hear about the benefits — how will buying this product help them?

Many prospective patients, especially millennials, shop for health care services like they would for any product: They read online product information, seek out other users’ reviews, and visit social media sites before making a decision. You can help them by touting the benefits of coming to you for laser therapy.

Use your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social pages to talk about the many laser treatments that can do, whether it’s help quitting smoking, losing weight, pain relief or another benefit that has been backed up by science. Be specific — address each benefit in a separate post, ideally with an image, and share to your social media pages.

If you do any paid advertising on Facebook, you may be able to specifically target people who need a particular benefit.

In addition to creating informational social posts about laser therapy, seek out and post testimonials from your patients about how laser therapy helped them.

For more information on social media marketing, visit the Business Tips section of ChiroEco.com.

What patient issues have you successfully treated with laser therapy?

Use the hashtag #CE65 for the chance to be featured on our Twitter @ChiroEcoMag

Each month we’ll ask a new question on our Facebook page. Join the conversation at facebook.com/ChiroEcoMag

Connecting the Dots

22nd Annual Fees & Reimbursements Survey Results

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THE PRODUCTS YOU KNOW,

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We’ve changed to better serve you.
Let's chalk about chiropractic.

Magic happens when something unexplainable happens, without having an understanding of how it happens. Over the course of history, science has been misunderstood as magic.

Tag #ChiroEcoMag for your chance to be featured aspinwallchiropractic VIP in the house!!! Dr. Jim's grandson, Otto, stopped by for an adjustment this morning!

We think so! No matter what comes your way today, take a moment to find something good in everything.

Adjustments create a good relationship between you and your spine, am I right?

VIP in the house!! Dr. Jim's grandson, Otto, stopped by for an adjustment this morning!

We think so! No matter what comes your way today, take a moment to find something good in everything.

Adjustments create a good relationship between you and your spine, am I right?

While we LOVE the summer and sunshine, we are excited to welcome and embrace the new season! It certainly feels more like Fall today!

While we LOVE the summer and sunshine, we are excited to welcome and embrace the new season! It certainly feels more like Fall today!

TEXT NECK. Also known as forward head posture. This condition is everywhere nowadays with the excessive use of smart phones, tablets/computers, and sitting for long periods of time.

You know it's going to be a good day if you are physically feeling good!

Make your workplace microvacations get adjusted.

Now that school is back in session, many high school and college sports are starting back up!

Here's a #throwbahtThursday post of ours and who knew your brain and gut has a significant connection.
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The American Chiropractic Association (ACA), in recognition of the importance of expanding the growing body of evidence behind chiropractic care, announced that it will contribute support to the Chiropractic Academy for Research Leadership (CARL), an international program that aims to identify and nurture talented emerging chiropractic research leaders.

CARL, originally established with a grant from the World Federation of Chiropractic and the European Centre for Chiropractic Research Excellence, aims not only to provide career development and mentoring to early career researchers, it also seeks to develop and lead a “sustainable international chiropractic research culture able to meet the evidence needs of patients, practitioners and policymakers.”

"The American Chiropractic Association supports evidence-based practice, and we recognize the need to cultivate a strong cohort of chiropractic researchers who are continually adding to the available evidence and who have the ability to represent chiropractic in international research circles,” said ACA President Robert C. Jones, DC.

Participants of the program, known as Fellows, are directly mentored by CARL founders: Professor Greg Kawchuk, DC, PhD, of the University of Alberta, Canada; Professor Jan Hartvigsen, PhD, of the University of Southern Denmark; and Professor Jon Adams, PhD, of the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. Each has extensive experience in health sciences research and managing mentorship/leadership development programs. They provide advice to participants on research focus, strategic development and career pathways.

Fellows, who come from around the globe, also work on collaborative research projects and publish results in peer-reviewed publications. They meet periodically to discuss initiatives to expand global research capacity relevant to the chiropractic profession.

As of Sept. 20, the CARL program is accepting applications for its second cohort, CARL II. “If you or anyone you know is undertaking a PhD or is within three years of PhD award (at date of application deadline) and you are committed to undertaking chiropractic research you are eligible to be considered for the second CARL cohort,” notes application information on the CARL website.

Applications are due Nov. 1.

To learn more about the program, visit carlresearchfellows.org.

— American Chiropractic Association, acatoday.org
Read more: ChiroEco.com/ACA-CARL
Humans choose food based on the way it looks, smells and tastes. But the microbes in our guts use a different classification system — one based on the molecular components that make up different fibers. In a study published Sept. 19 in the journal *Cell*, investigators found particular components of dietary fiber that encourage growth and metabolic action of beneficial microbes in the mouse gut.

The research aims to develop ways to identify compounds that can enhance the representation of health-promoting members of the gut microbial community. The goal is to identify sustainable, affordable dietary fiber sources for incorporation into next-generation, more nutritious food products.

“Fiber is understood to be beneficial. But fiber is actually a very complicated mixture of many different components,” says senior author Jeffrey Gordon, a microbiologist at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

“Moreover, fibers from different plant sources that are processed in different ways during food manufacturing have different constituents. Unfortunately, we lack detailed knowledge of these differences and their biological significance. We do know that modern Western diets have low levels of fiber; this lack of fiber has been linked to loss of important members of the gut community and deleterious health effects.”

— Science Daily, sciencedaily.com

Read more: ChiroEco.com/biosensors
Laser combined with chiropractic

In the simplest equation, one and one are two, but in health care, the sum of one and one can be three. Simply put, combining two outstanding treatment methods can give a better result than using them individually.

As you may know, lasers heal using the principle of photobiomodulation. Without going too deep into the technical aspects, photobiomodulation refers to the reaction of the cell and mitochondria to light stimulation.

This phenomenon causes an increase in adenosine triphosphate (ATP) and healing of the damaged structure.

Our practice has a large following for only laser therapy, especially for areas such as the knees, low back and shoulders. Laser is extremely fast and results are often immediate. When combined with spinal decompression, the results can be extraordinary.

When the disc has been addressed and rehydrated, the results last longer and healing is quicker when followed with laser therapy.

Laser therapy is used to help keep the vertebra in line as well as help with the healing process of the disc. If you use a dual-frequency laser, you’ll find it good for rehabilitation, pain control and improved blood flow. — Gary Huddleston, DC
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IMPLEMENTING LASER THERAPY IN YOUR PRACTICE

Increase patient wellness, and your practice’s bottom line, one beam of light at a time

BY CHRISTINA DEBUSK
TIME TO READ: 14-16 MIN.

THE TAKEAWAY
Lasers can cost anywhere from $7,900 to $100,000 for fat-loss lasers, but the ROI is impressive — for example, if the lease payment is $200 per month and you charge $30-50 for an individual treatment, the expense is recouped in as few as four sessions, and anything over and above is your profit. DCs are now using lasers to help patients ease a variety of musculoskeletal issues.

THE IDEA OF USING LIGHT WAVELENGTHS TO IMPROVE PATIENT HEALING while also reducing pain, inflammation and swelling is a relatively young science, beginning in the 1960s. It was during this time that Hungarian physician Endre Mester discovered that beams of light were capable of stimulating healing in mice.

From there Mester went on to test the validity of these early laser devices to see if they had the same positive healing impact on humans. They did. Thus, the practice of using low-level laser light therapy — or photobiomodulation, as it is now officially known — was born.
The advancement of laser therapy

Technically there are several different types of lasers used within a medical setting. However, for our purposes, we'll be talking specifically about the therapeutic lasers utilized within the chiropractic field. These lasers work by “delivering red and infrared wavelengths (colors) of light which penetrate to various depths in the tissues to stimulate phytochemical effects,” explains Phil Harrington, DC, CMLSO, FASLMS, clinical manager, human medical director and laser safety officer at Summus Medical Laser.

These effects include positively impacting collagen formation, healing speed, tensile strength and stress, mast cell numbers and rate of degranulation, and flap survival, according to research published in *Photomedicine and Laser Surgery*.

The reason these lasers are called low-level dates to the mid-1970s, says Harrington, when R. Glen Calderhead coined this term “to distinguish the therapeutic effects of laser from those of the ablative or surgical lasers.” Harrington adds, “some people use the terms to refer to the power output of the laser itself, which is incorrect and only leads to confusion.”

Laser science, chiropractic and the FDA

Studies have confirmed that laser therapy offers beneficial effects. The American Society for Laser Medicine & Surgery Inc. shares that among them are pain relief, decreased inflammation, and faster recovery from sports-related injuries.

DCs specifically are using lasers to help their patients ease a variety of musculoskeletal issues. A few of the most common include chronic neck and shoulder pain, says Charlie Shanks, vice president of Erchonia Corporation, though they’ve also recently received market clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to use lasers to treat low-back and overall body pain, broadening the scope of treatment even further.

Just as Harrington states that there has been some confusion around the definition of low-level laser therapy, Shanks says that FDA market clearance has suffered from misperception as well.

In order for a laser to be granted FDA market clearance, it has to meet certain success criteria, says Shanks. While most people believe that this criteria is all about safety, it’s not. The laser manufacturer has to prove efficacy, too.

“This is why they are so stringent on what they can say,” says Shanks, referring to the claims that the FDA says DCs can make when it comes to marketing laser therapy. If research has not proven that a particular laser can treat a specific condition, it cannot be marketed in that way.

This is critical, Shanks says, because in order to get FDA market clearance, comprehensive studies must be conducted, most of which take a minimum of 2-3 years to complete. And the process is getting more difficult as time goes on since this federal agency has added more investigators and is becoming more stringent.

FDA approval

While more control from governing bodies is typically frowned upon, Shanks says that this is a positive in the laser industry as “if they [the FDA] put tighter criteria on devices that are approved, it’s a win for everyone.”

Harrington adds that, in addition to laser-based research studies being extremely lengthy, they are also costly since “a basic human study on a certain condition starts at $150,000.”
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DOCTOR TESTIMONIAL

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– Dr. Terry Gibson D.C.
TheFatLossExpert.com, Chico, CA

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But as policy makers attempt to resolve the opioid crisis, photobiomodulation "is getting more attention" as an alternative therapy, Harrington says, with the National Institutes of Health now awarding grants for studies involving these devices.

DCs can also use low-level lasers to help patients obtain non-invasive fat loss, says Shanks, and though they are not yet an FDA-cleared treatment for aging, lasers can be beneficial for effects that are associated with the typical aging cycle. This includes increasing range of motion, decreasing pain and increasing collagen production.

Implementing laser therapy and ROI
For those considering adding laser therapy to a chiropractic practice there are a couple of factors to consider. The first is cost.

If the intention is to conduct laser therapy as a pain management treatment, laser therapy devices can run anywhere from $7,900-$40,000, says Shanks. Additionally, lasers designed to provide aesthetic results, such as non-invasive fat-loss lasers, are generally even more expensive, costing $50,000-$100,000 or more each.

Though this type of price tag may sound daunting, both Harrington and Shanks indicate that the cost can easily be recouped. For example, if your device lease payment is $200 per month and you charge $30-50 for an individual treatment, the expense is recouped in as few as four sessions. Anything over and above is your profit.

In addition to cost, Harrington further stresses the importance of researching the clinical effectiveness of the device before making a buy.

"If a laser does not work, it will sit on the shelf collecting dust and the ROI [return on investment] is zero," he says. "I hear of DCs who thought they were saving money by buying inexpensive (low-end) therapy lasers and, in a short time, regretted the decision."

In short, Harrington says, do your own due diligence regarding research.

"Ask colleagues who are using a laser," he suggests. "Seek out laser providers in other parts of the country. Ask them what they are using the laser for, how successful it is, whether patients come in asking for the laser treatments, the number of referrals and repeat customers the laser generates, etc."

Shanks agrees, adding that, "When you look at any device, it should be backed by sound research."

This means considering only lasers that have utilized an independent review board, which means the lasers were measured against real devices versus placebos.

DCs specifically are using lasers to help their patients ease a variety of musculoskeletal issues. A few of the most common include chronic neck and shoulder pain.
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- Tim Burkhart, DC, BCIM
Successfully adding laser therapy to your practice requires that you market the new treatment option in a way that both educates and excites your target audience, which isn’t always easy.

**Marketing your new laser therapy**
Successfully adding laser therapy to your practice requires that you market the new treatment option in a way that both educates and excites your target audience, which isn’t always easy. “I think getting patients to understand the efficacy of laser and the overall impact they can have is one of the biggest challenges,” Shanks says.

To help overcome this challenge, Harrington shares that marketing laser therapy strategies to consider include:

- Educating staff and getting them excited about the new treatment option, potentially by demonstrating laser therapy with them. This enables staff to share their own positive experiences with patients, generating additional excitement.
- Sharing the value of laser therapy via all marketing avenues. For example, give patients brochures that help them better understand what laser therapy is, how it works, and how it can help them. Use digital mediums by posting information about laser therapy on websites and social media pages.
- Talking to existing patients about low-level laser therapy and offering the service to them. Share how it could positively impact their specific conditions in a way that gives them the opportunity to ask questions.
- Collecting and sharing testimonials from those who have engaged in low-level laser therapy and had a
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positive experience. These testimonials can be obtained in writing or by video and shared on marketing platforms.

- Offering lectures about laser therapy on a community level, sharing your knowledge and passion with larger groups of potential patients. Hold them in your office or at a local event where others will already be gathered.

$7,900–$100,000
Range of cost for laser devices which serve a vast array of specialties

The future of laser treatment
Where will lasers go from here? When it comes to the devices themselves, Harrington says that he sees lasers “optimizing the parameters to deliver the safest, most effective treatments for our patients. This could mean new wavelengths in the red and near-infrared spectrum.”

Additionally, although continuous wave is the gold standard, solid scientific evidence appears to support various pulse frequencies, according to Harrington.

“Future research will indicate which pulse frequencies are most effective for specific tissues or pathologies,” he says.

The relatively young field has come a long way in a short time, and is already supplying chiropractors with a new income stream from patients looking to speed their healing with a safe non-drug alternative.

“We see such a bright future,” says Shanks, referring specifically to research his company is conducting on the neurological effects that lasers potentially offer. “Results early on are pretty amazing.”

CHRISTINA DEBUSK is a freelance writer who specializes in content related to natural health and wellness, personal development and small-business marketing. She can be contacted through ChristinaMDeBusk.com.

References can be found online at chiroeco.com
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Lasers are commonly divided into two primary classes: non-thermal (a.k.a. cold lasers), which are Class 3, and thermal lasers which are Class 4.

Why you need a laser in your practice

- 1. The depth of tissue penetration;
- 2. The area being treated;
- 3. Attended laser treatment versus non-attended;
- 4. Understanding the ranges and settings of the laser in use, and;
- 5. The cost of the laser.

Laser therapy is essentially “light therapy,” and much as the sun creates “solar energy,” laser therapy works by helping the cells create energy, and this energy reinforces the opportunity for proper tissue healing. Thus, good cells equate to good tissue (healthy tissue) and bad cells equate to bad tissue (unhealthy or damaged tissue). Laser therapy thus acts as a “magnet to blood” and fosters better oxygen and better respiration to cells and tissues. Essentially, laser therapy is helping patients “get rid of the bad and bring in the good” with respect to tissue repair. When nerves, muscles, discs, cartilage and joints can improve, then patient outcomes are thus enhanced with laser therapy.

PERRY BARD, DC, is co-president of DISC Centers of America, and can be contacted at newpatientnow@aol.com.
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THE NATIONAL 2019 BY THE FLORIDA CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION celebrated a record-breaking year as the world’s largest event for chiropractic attracted more than 4,000 attendees, nearly 2,000 chiropractors and more than 275 companies in 400+ exhibits.

Held on Aug. 22-25 at the Hyatt Regency Orlando, 106 notable speakers inspired the many seasoned and early practitioners, as well as the 600 students in attendance. The event debuted new tracks and topics this year including technology, mobile and house calls, research, technique, veterans, female athletes and national/international issues and solutions of the profession. Attendees also had the opportunity to take their learning off-campus with a class visit to the NBA’s Orlando Magic training facility.

Historic announcements

As a top meeting hub for the industry, the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress (F4CP) chose The National to announce two historic events for chiropractic. The first is the upcoming 125th celebration of chiropractic. As part of the celebration and through collaboration with the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, chiropractic will unite with the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to debut five 30-second commercials.

Additional groups were also present and used The National as a meeting place, including the World Federation of Chiropractic, American Chiropractic Association, Association of Chiropractic Colleges, The Summit, F4CP, ChiroCongress, Federation of Licensing Boards, National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and Florida Board of Chiropractic Medicine, as well as numerous colleges.

Awards and honors

The National celebrated multiple achievements including DC of the Year, presented to Jerry True, DC; an Impact Award presented to Paul Lambert, JD; the Convention Honoree Award given to Joseph Ciccarello, DC; and ChiroHealthUSA awarded the largest achievement-based scholarship, The Foxworth Family Chiropractic Scholarship, to Robert J. Butler, who attends Palmer College of Chiropractic-West Campus.

Visit TheNationalChiro.com to find the most up-to-date information for 2020, including dates, speakers, program and more.

DCs Anthony Lisi, Bill Morgan, Stephanie Johnson and Robert Rosenbaum pose after presenting on “A Military Panel Discussion of Chiropractic Treatment for the Veteran: Standard Procedures, Risks and Rewards”
Anthony Lisi, DC, addressing thousands of attendees during a keynote panel

Attendees enjoying the expo and networking between classes

Dan Murphy, DC, teaching a breakout session on “Practical Applications for Low-Level Laser Hormesis”

Jay Greenstein, DC, taking a quick selfie break during the technology panel

Jay Greenstein, DC, speaking to thousands of attendees during the brand-new Technology Symposium

Jeffrey Mackey, DC, demonstrating an adjustment during a breakout session on Gonstead Technique

Attendees practicing technique as led by Mark Charrette, DC, in a session on “Advanced Lower Extremity Adjustment”

Thousands of attendees participating in a keynote panel

Attendees taking a stretch break during a keynote panel

Phyllis Frase-Charrette educating attendees participating in The Ultimate CA Track

DCs Lou Sportelli, Christine Goertz, Roni Evans, Stephanie Sullivan, Heidi Haavik, Jay Greenstein and Harry Van Loveren

Doctors of Chiropractic: Sports Instructors and attendees at the NBA’s Orlando Magic Training Facility
FLUFFING THE POM-POMS

Motivating employees or staff is an always-on effort that also requires planning

BY MONICA WOFFORD, CSP

THE TAKEAWAY

In sports, pom-poms grab attention and capture the fans. In your office employees and patients are your biggest fans to consider, and you must continually motivate them in ways that really matter.

BEFORE ROLLING YOUR EYES AT THE THOUGHT of having to be one bit more perky in order to motivate a staff you already pay for adequate performance, consider the ritual of a cheerleader.

The day of the big game, he or she prepares the outfit, stretches the muscles, practices all jumps and yes, fluffs, crimps and rejuvenates the pom-poms. In college cheerleading, it is quite the tradition. But why, you ask? Stretching reduces injury. Practice keeps mistakes from happening. But pom-pom fluffing? This cannot serve a legitimate purpose, can it?

Pom-poms grab attention and capture the fans. Fans are the followers who buy and sell tickets. Fans incite the stadium with excitement that shows up on TV and in the emotions of those present who will readily return, win or lose, for that kind of experience.

Your big game

It’s true; ESPN doesn’t televise your practice. Cheerleaders don’t stand outside your office creating foot traffic. However, your big game happens daily with each and every patient and each and every employee and each and every experience that keeps them coming back...or not, for that kind of treatment. Employees are your biggest fans, or could be, if you continually motivate them in ways that really matter. Consider these invaluable tips on when to fluff the proverbial pom-poms in an effort to motivate the team that is taking care of your patients.
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- Breast cancer marker dropped 10 points in 1 month!
- 6 yr/o girl avoids colostomy
- Extreme atopic dermatitis gone in 3.5 months
- 4 months: Hgb A1C reduced from 13.7 down to 6.3
- RA: less than 2 months, she is off all drugs: Embrel, Methotrexate, Celebrex, Darvacet, Percadan, Vicadin, Norflex, Lasix
- Type 1 diabetes: 250 units to zero insulin in 4 months
- Cholesterol 1,090, down to 194 and Triglycerides from 4,920 down to 82 in 2 weeks
- In 3 weeks: Her hot flashes, night sweats, toe fungus and headaches are gone!

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January 18-19 Seattle, WA
January 25-26 Salt Lake City, UT
February 22-23 Louisville, KY
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Daily fluffing

If your approach to your office, before treating your first patient, mirrors that of a leader desperate for coffee, then it’s likely your attitude and motivation could use a bit of fluffing.

Employees and leaders alike experience life in the mornings before working hours, and whether your chief complaint is traffic, bad coffee or having to come to work in the first place, the employees you lead are picking up swiftly on your demeanor. Be the light that they enjoy coming to see. Strive to be a beacon of encouragement, and provide positive words of affirmation, compliments or even pleasant greetings. Heck, if it’s all you’ve got, simply be the person who makes their morning no worse.

Daily motivation is how you keep the momentum going and it doesn’t require a marching band or pom-poms or confetti. Most of the time it simply requires a bit of awareness, kindness and clarity.

Be aware of the mood in the office. Note when something is off or a staff member has a problem. Take them aside or chat quietly with them one-on-one. You don’t want to lose touch with an issue that could get out of hand. Address it quickly so you know what action might be needed, if any. Share kindness with those whose smile could be brighter and share clarity with those who seem to have forgotten the work guidelines and expectations about behavior once we enter the door of the practice. Daily is a good time to fluff the pom-poms.

Quarterly fluffing

And then there are the bigger, championship types of events where the pom-poms get extra fluffing. In the world of work and running a practice, this might be the time when you sit down to have a more formal conversation about performance. This might be once a quarter when you schedule time with each staff member to review goals, performance and achievement.

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Employees are your biggest fans, or could be, if you continually motivate them in ways that really matter.

pulse daily. You will motivate employees to do far more, far faster, and far more in line with your expectations if you tell them what your goals and expectations are. When you check in with them one-on-one about where the practice is going, how it's growing, and what they've done to help or hurt those efforts, it makes a difference. Quarterly is a good time to fluff the pom-poms.

**Annual fluffing**

Annual gatherings or big events, which could simply be a slightly larger version or more special version of a regular quarterly meeting, should be celebrations. They should be times for providing bonuses, if applicable. They should be times for cheering on those who did well and in the absence of cheering for poor performers, send a message that to be celebrated this time next year, some things have gotta change around here.

Often the annual meeting, gathering, team event or celebration happens around the holidays. Annually is a good time to fluff the pom-poms. In fact, the key, whether daily, quarterly or annually, is consistency. Your ability to motivate and manage the performance of those you lead is less about timing than about regularity and consistency. The regularity with which you meet is even less important than the clarity you provide about direction, future and growth opportunities. The clarity you provide is more motivating when it's shared in a way relevant to what truly motivates each person and manages to push their positive buttons.

**Prepare every day**

Every day is the big game when you open the doors and welcome in patients again. Every day, you want to be your staff's biggest fan and watch them welcome new business into the experience of your practice.

Maybe first, it's time to fluff the pom-poms and make plans for how you'll keep them fluffed without having to consistently act as if you're wearing them. Motivation isn't just about being positive and perky, but about being purposeful in how you motivate, manage and celebrate the team you have the privilege of leading.

**MONICA WOFFORD, CSP, is a leadership consultant and coach and the author of Make Difficult People Disappear. As CEO of Contagious Companies Inc., a leadership training and consulting firm, she works with all levels of leaders to develop their leadership skills. To contact her or for more information go to ContagiousCompanies.com or call 866-382-0121.**

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IMPLEMENTING A LEADING-EDGE TRAINING PROGRAM
A critical adjustment to your clinic’s backbone

BY CHRIS TOMSHACK, DC
TIME TO READ: 6-8 MIN.

THE TAKEAWAY
If you suspect your staff or organizational training is lax, look to the franchise model. In the world of chiropractic, stand-alone clinics must wear many hats. If the one they wear for training isn’t a good fit, then clinic owners should review their budgets and assess their resources.

TRAINING IS CRITICAL. If you want to build a million-dollar clinic, then you have to train like a million-dollar clinic owner. This is not hyperbole. In the world of chiropractic, the importance of training cannot be overstated. Yet, all too often in the chiropractic industry, training tends to be inadequate, if it’s even present at all. This is the primary reason turnover tends to be high, especially at the front desk position.

How can a clinic thrive when its employee entrance is a revolving door? With an underprepared team, it’s nearly impossible to provide superior-quality patient care, but with the proper mindset and planning, a clinic can achieve next-level results for its patients and community.

Focus on training
The current largest chiropractic and functional rehab-based franchise in the United States was founded with a focus on training. Training programs need to be routine and robust (the hallmark of any successful franchise). For franchises, training ensures that franchisees are educated, because trained team members are more viable team members.

Viability increases the team’s value to the clinic and, subsequently, their value to the patients they serve. All things weighed and balanced, a well-trained team helps deliver a consistently higher level of experience to patients.

A driving need
Well-regulated training is a necessity because, typically, non-clinical team members have zero experience in the realm of chiropractic and, quite often, virtually no experience in the health care industry at large.

Clinic owners must address these training concerns. Indeed, it is incumbent upon each clinic owner to choose a training and
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support system that can teach him or her how to grow an incredibly fun and ethically profitable business, a system that can also teach the owner how to become an excellent leader and CEO of his or her practice. This will surely result in well-trained team members and higher employee retention rates.

Yet, owners often find that providing training requires a sizable investment of resources (time and money). Owners are often doctors, and doctors don’t often have the educational background and experience necessary to build a training program.

Yet, owners often find that providing training requires a sizable investment of resources (time and money). Owners are often doctors, and doctors don’t often have the educational background and experience necessary to build a training program.

Training and support
A leading-edge training program also needs to be combined with a dynamic support system.

Franchises can provide full-time support for every facet of running a practice, from attracting new patients to providing live, on-site training for franchisees. Franchise regional developers are provided who have the time, training and resources to visit each office, often monthly, where they make real-time assessments, “take the pulse” of each clinic, and mentor each team member face-to-face. This is the kind of mentorship that works, and it requires a well-tested, quality-controlled, methodical approach.

Reporting results
The proof of success for a franchise and franchisees is in the reporting: On a consistent basis, the clinics that train produce statistics that rank between the center and top end of the “sweet spot,” the optimal point of achievement. The clinics that don’t train as aggressively are easy to identify because their metrics begin to migrate to the lower end of the bell curve. By closely following these metrics, support teams can quickly and easily recognize when a clinic is training correctly and when it is not.

Franchises can provide discerning observations and a detailed analysis of every clinic, every week, which is then addressed during on-site visits — a recipe-like system that provides top results.

After initial onboarding, franchise owners and their teams continue learning and growing throughout their respective careers, continuing to access lessons and engage in trainings. They train with team members and regional developers and attend workshops and regional conferences.
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In the world of chiropractic, stand-alone clinics must wear many hats. If the one they wear for training isn’t a good fit, then clinic owners should review their budgets and assess their resources. If they believe that training is expensive, they should consider the cost of no training — or worse, poor training. The costliest scenario is the one in which an owner must pay to correct the routine practices of team members that are inaccurate, wasteful and potentially hazardous. Research shows that it takes between 3,000-5,000 repetitions to break a bad habit, while learning a new habit requires only 300-500 movements.

Clinics should introduce each new team member to a thorough and precise training program as soon as possible. In the matter of forming good training practices, muscle memory comes at a premium.

Your best practice
Training is critical to a clinic’s success. It’s the reason why, before starting a franchise, I ran the largest clinics in their markets. I owe the success of my second office — a million-dollar office that ran so efficiently I could go eight months without walking through the front door — to training. Eight months could go by, and I would still know the name of each person on my team.

Training is not new to our industry. It’s merely a best practice, which, unfortunately, was never adopted by chiropractic and other fragmented industries.

Successful companies invest in successful ideas borrowed from other professions, and myriad professionals across a vast network of related and unrelated industries agree: A company’s success is oftentimes dependent upon the self-sustaining, smooth-running mechanics of a fantastic training program.

CHRIS TOMSHACK, DC, is the founder and CEO of HealthSource, a chiropractic franchise with nearly 300 domestic and international clinics serving more than six million patients. Tomshack was in the Air Force ROTC at Ohio University and served in the National Guard. He authored The Ultimate Practice Adjustment and co-authored Freedom from Fat. For more information or to contact him, visit healthsourcechiro.com.
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CODE WITH CONFIDENCE IN TODAY’S REGULATORY CLIMATE

Coding doesn’t have to be complicated

BY KATHY MILLS CHANG, MCS-P, CCPC, CCCA

TIME TO READ: 6-7 MIN.

THE TAKEAWAY

Walk through the ABCs (and Ds and Es) of “The Coding Language” and find out how to communicate with payers to bring in maximum reimbursements and develop rock-solid compliance.

CHIROPRACTIC ONLINE COMMUNITY CODING DISCUSSIONS are often like the discussions you hear on a talk show. One person has an opinion on coding based on what a friend is doing. Another just returned from a seminar and fear is the driving factor, while others code the same way they have for the last 15 years.

So how does someone code with confidence? What is the most effective way to communicate with your payers? Actually, it is simply learning the easiest foreign language in the world — and I’ll bet you didn’t realize that learning a new language could be easy. Let’s look at our new language, “The Coding Language,” from the beginning.

Find and translate

First, understand the subjective reasons your patient has come to your office. Second, consider the objective findings and translate them into your documentation. Third, convert all of this into “The Coding Language” by using CPT and ICD-10 coding to translate to the language your payer requires.

Finally, transmit this new language the appropriate way with the appropriate documentation. In this language course, if you are successful in translation, you will get paid quickly and easily for the services you performed.

It comes down to the ABCDEs of coding:

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You can count on a denial when you first find a code you want to bill, and then try to tie that code to the service you performed.

- Be Current on Coding Policy
- Consistent and Complete Documentation
- Develop Policies and Procedures
- Evaluate Regularly

**Accuracy = translation = understanding = proper reimbursement**

Accuracy in coding doesn't have to be complicated but does require some education on the guidelines. Both the doctor and the staff must understand the mechanics of coding to avoid over- or under-coding.

The easiest way to stay accurate is to provide a service — and then find the best code for that service. You can count on a denial when you first find a code you want to bill, and then try to tie that code to the service you performed. When you are coding an evaluation and management (E/M) service, chiropractic manipulative treatment (CMT) or any other code applicable to your practice, make sure the coding matches the documentation. The more accurate you are, the better it “translates” to your payer — and can eliminate dialogue back-and-forth with more questions.

**Being current in coding = compliance**

Coding changes often — sometimes every year! It is vital that you and your team understand the updated codes. Whether you learn best in a seminar setting, by reading publications or by studying in an online library of training, don’t miss this critical compliance process. The onus is placed on the provider to stay up to date on new coding changes. This includes understanding your payer’s interpretation of coding.

For example, there are viable codes for certain services, but that doesn’t mean your payer will consider them for reimbursement. Kinesiology taping is a great example: Most payers consider it experimental, unproven and investigational. Know how to code these instances in order to receive proper payment from your patient.

**Consistent and complete documentation**

Understanding the language of documentation can be tricky, especially if it’s not applied consistently. Consider that you’ve taken a Spanish course and feel pretty good about conversing in the language. Then you speak with someone who is a native speaker of Spanish. You hear a mix of slang, Puerto Rican Spanish, Castilian Spanish and so forth. It can cause you to second-guess everything you’ve learned, and before you know it, you really don’t comprehend any of it.

This same concept can apply to your practice when there is a lack of consistency in the descriptors of your services. This translation disaster will reflect on your practice. All services rendered in the visit must be included in the treatment plan. The patient’s response to treatment should be included. All ancillary services should be documented and if time-based codes are used, the documentation must reflect this time.

**Develop policies and procedures**

Many offices admit that their policies and procedures consist of a verbal, “Remember, we decided on that a few years ago!” Compliance regulations require that policies and procedures are written and easily accessible. They should also be accompanied by regular training in your office.
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¹ JAMA. Bon Miller et al., 2017
² www.designsforhealth.com/hemp
As a part of your practice's compliance program, develop clear coding, billing policy and procedure as required and follow it. Do you understand, for example, when you code 97124, therapeutic massage, vs. when you code 97140? Or when you code 97110, therapeutic exercise vs. 97530, therapeutic activities? If not, your coding could be deemed willy-nilly. Let clear policy and procedure drive your coding for safety and peace of mind.

Evaluate regularly
Because coding rules change, your coding processes must be evaluated regularly. Not only do the coding rules change, but we change. Think about your documentation today as compared to even a few years ago. It probably looks different, perhaps more robust. Perhaps you offer more services than you did before. We can expect a big coding change in 2020, when dry needling will get a CPT code. Many who provide this service have had to code it “the best they can,” but that will change.

All coding and documentation should be constantly updated and evaluated. Consider the Golden Gate Bridge. Just when they think they have it painted and are at the other end, they go back and do it again. Continual and ongoing updating can provide peace of mind. Self-audits, or a proactive audit by an outside company, are always a good idea.

These self-evaluations can enhance confidence in your processes. If you don’t know how to do this, remember, you don’t have to know everything: you just have to know someone who does.

Apply your language skills
Coding is a language that comes with practice, resources, education and ongoing immersion. There are many tools available to assist both doctors and staff to ensure they are coding with confidence. Immerse in this language one item at a time. Gain confidence with E/M coding. Understand all aspects of what makes up a 99203 compared to a 99213.

Next, dive into the inner workings of CMT codes, such as the necessary documentation requirements of spinal CMT vs. extra-spinal CMT, code 98943. Study each category of your office’s services and codes and master each area. If you do, you will be able to code with confidence. Remember how to eat an elephant? One bite at a time.

KATHY MILLS CHANG is a Certified Medical Compliance Specialist (MCS-P), Certified Chiropractic Professional Coder (CCPC), and Certified Clinical Chiropractic Assistant (CCCA). Since 1983, she has been providing chiropractors with reimbursement and compliance training, advice and tools to improve the financial performance of their practices. Kathy leads a team of 21 at KMC University and is known as one of our profession’s foremost experts on compliance, Medicare, documentation and CA development.

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ORTHOTICS AND KIDS
A quick method for checking children for orthotics needs

BY BRIAN JENSEN, DC
TIME TO READ: 9-11 MIN.

THE TAKEAWAY
Performing an orthotics exam for children can be crucial for catching early-development issues that cause major problems later in life. Most problems arise when the feet and legs do not align properly or when the main longitudinal arch does not develop fully.

CHILDHOOD FOOT PROBLEMS CAN HAVE BOTH IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS. During growth, the normal development of the pelvis and the spine will suffer if there is a foot imbalance. A budding athlete’s skill level — even running at recess — can be significantly affected.¹

Later on, foot problems from childhood can interfere with adolescent (or adult) spinal function, which can result in poor biomechanics and accelerated degenerative changes in the knees, hips and spine. With a relatively quick screening of their younger patients, chiropractors can identify those who need early intervention, and then provide proper custom-made orthotic support.

Early development
Especially as we begin to walk, and during early development, the lower extremity changes significantly. The legs undergo rotation, in order to allow the feet to align with the knees and hips for smooth gait. The arches slowly become more obvious and increase in height as our gait improves.

The foot grows faster than the rest of the body; it achieves three-quarters of its mature length by the time a child is 7 years old.² Most problems arise when the feet and legs do not align properly (in-toeing or out-toeing), or when the main longitudinal arch does not develop fully.

In- and out-toeing
Shoe modifications such as wedges, special lasts and corrective orthotics have no significant predictable effect on children with in-toeing or out-toeing.³,⁴

Exercising the involved external (or internal) rotation muscles (to accelerate or stabilize the normal developmental rotation of the leg) may be useful but has not been reliably tested. At this point, the best
recommendation for most kids is to wear good shoes, and to focus on sports and activities that develop balanced leg muscles. When there is a family history of poor foot/leg alignment, custom-made orthotics may be of some benefit, primarily in improving biomechanical function and coordination during sports performance.

**Flat foot**
The longitudinal arch normally develops during the first 6-10 years of growth. The reduced incidence of flatfoot seen in studies of barefoot populations suggests that muscle strength and mobility are important factors in the normal development of the arches.

This means that a child is more likely to develop a flexible, yet strong arch when going barefoot. Wearing orthopedic shoes or arch inserts does not seem to influence the development of normal arches.

Parents should be encouraged to let children go barefoot whenever it is safe, and to select shoes based on function, not just on style or cost.

**Screening exam for orthotics**
A very quick method for checking kids for the need for orthotics follows. This lower-extremity screening examination fits well into standard chiropractic examination procedures and can be performed easily on children down to ages 5-6.

When several red flags are present, you will have to discuss the findings and the probable need for orthotics with the parents.

- **Observe the child’s gait** — By studying a few normal, relaxed paces, several abnormal gait findings can be distinguished. With young patients, the most common fault is in-toeing, followed closely by excessive toeing-out (foot flare). This can be identified by looking at the alignment of the foot with the lower leg as your patient walks. An angle that is either less than 5° or greater than 15° is a red flag for excessive rotational torque stresses into the knees, sacroiliac joints and spine.

  - **Knee to foot alignment** — Look at the lower legs of the child from the
**SCREENING EXAM FOR KIDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observe the child’s gait</th>
<th>Look for foot flare (toe-out, toe-in, or other gait abnormality)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check knee-to-foot alignment</td>
<td>Medial facing (“squinting”) patellae or valgus knees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at the achilles tendons</td>
<td>Medial bowing is associated with an everted calcaneus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palpate the medial arches</td>
<td>Check for lack of an arch and/or painful plantar fascia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toe raise test for flexibility</td>
<td>Rules out a rigid flat foot, as in tarsal coalition or equinus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for subluxations</td>
<td>Adjust, then check for recurrence with walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at the shoes</td>
<td>Check for excessive lateral heel wear or shoe breakdown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

front. Mentally drop a straight line down from the mid-point of each kneecap to the foot. This imaginary plumb line should strike the foot over the first two metatarsals. If the knees point out or in when the feet are straight ahead, or if there is a valgus angulation (knock-knees), another red flag is raised.

Is the Achilles tendon straight? — When you see a patient’s heel cord bowing inward (medially), you have a red flag that indicates probable instability of the calcaneus. When the heel does not align with the Achilles tendon, the child will develop into an overpronator, and this biomechanical fault will interfere with knee, hip and spinal function over the decades.

Check the medial arches — If you cannot get your finger under the medial longitudinal arch, the child is not developing normal arches. While palpating the arch, take a moment to push upward into the plantar fascia. Even a brief palpation will tell you if the connective tissue that supports the arch is intact or is under excessive strain. If this is painful to the child, it is possibly the sign of early plantar fasciitis, which is likely to still be at a stage where conservative biomechanical treatment will be rapidly helpful.

Perform a toe raise — If there is a lack of development of the medial arch, ask the child to do a toe raise. By standing up on the toes, the plantar fascia is put under tension, creating a temporary arch in patients with a flexible flat foot. If the foot remains flat (or becomes convex) in this position, it is likely that the child has a rigid flat foot. This is due to an anatomical fixation, such as a tarsal coalition or an equinus foot.

Check for recurring subluxations — Palpate and adjust any parts of the foot that are not functioning normally. Ask the child to walk around the room a few times, and then re-check. If the extremity subluxations that were just adjusted have returned, it demonstrates an underlying biomechanical problem which will need external support.

Look at the shoes — Take a moment to inspect the wear pattern on the child’s shoes. Parents may need to be instructed to bring in a worn pair for better analysis. Look to see if there are any excessive or abnormal wear patterns present, either at the heels or in the upper, softer portions of the shoes. A red flag is any asymmetrical, excessive or lateral wearing down of a heel, or a bulging or tearing of the shoe’s upper material.

**Orthotics for kids**
Children do not usually need custom orthotics until about the age of six years. If at that point a child is still not developing a normal arch, or if in-toeing persists, orthotics may be needed.

This is particularly true when the child is involved in athletics and sports activities. In these cases, custom-made orthotic support for the arches can significantly improve gait and running performance. Otherwise, many children are well-served by wearing sensible, flexible shoes.

When there is a family history of flat feet or in-toeing, a more aggressive use of orthotics is appropriate. Parents will need to be informed of the need to regularly refit the orthotics as the child’s foot grows.

**BRIAN JENSEN, DC**, is a graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic and the owner of Cave Spring Chiropractic in Roanoke, Va. In practice for more than 30 years, he is a highly sought-after chiropractic lecturer and educator. When he’s not practicing he speaks on behalf of Foot Levelers on a regular basis.

References can be found online at chiroeco.com

The longitudinal arch normally develops during the first 6-10 years of growth.
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90% of clients show improvement on charting and SOAP notes.

Source: TechValidate survey of 2,030 users of ChiroTouch:
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NO MATTER WHAT YOU OWE FOR TAXES EACH YEAR, without the right preparation, tax time can be a nightmare.

Spending time planning in advance will help reduce some of the heartache and stress. There are many different tax structures, requirements and regulations — so spend some time familiarizing yourself. On top of this, there are also state and local tax requirements that may apply, depending on where you live.

For specific tax advice that applies to your situation, consider seeking advice from a CPA or licensed tax preparer. Some of the common taxes paid by chiropractors:

**Clinic tax structures**

What structure you use for your business is generally what dictates your overall tax situation. Even with tax reform changes over the past two years, each structure is treated differently.

Sole proprietorships, partnerships, limited liability companies (LLCs), and corporations all come with their own tax rules and expectations. Your tax structure dictates how you file taxes and may impact how often you pay as well.

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requirements and local requirements, you may be responsible for:

- Self-employment
- Taxes for your employees, if applicable
- State taxes

Self-employment taxes
You may be responsible for self-employment taxes as well. This is an ongoing payment you make four times per year, dividing up your tax liability and covering your portion and the employer’s portion of Social Security and Medicare taxes.

Here’s how these payments break down:

- **Social Security**: Making up 12.4% of your income, Social Security taxes pay in so you can withdraw Social Security payments later. Employed workers only pay half this, but since you’re self-employed, you’re responsible for the full amount.

- **Medicare**: Of your total income, this is 2.9%. It’s paying in to Medicare so you...
Even if you just consult with a tax pro once to create a comprehensive tax plan, it may be a worthwhile investment.

Financial Advice

can receive these benefits in the future.

- Federal income taxes: The remaining portion goes toward your income taxes.

These taxes are the alternative to automatic withholding — something not available to the self-employed, unless you choose to structure your business so you can become a W2 employee of your own corporation or organization.

Finding professional advice

Professional tax advice can help the business side of your clinic stay on track. If you're unsure how to approach your taxes or you need a plan that lasts your clinic throughout the year, getting the right advice might be the answer.

Chiropractors who are just starting a new business or making significant changes to their organization are in a great position to get help from a CPA or other tax professional. Even if you just consult with a tax pro once to create a comprehensive tax plan, it may be a worthwhile investment.

These tax scenarios may be signs that it's time to get professional tax assistance:

- **Status changes:** Adjusting tax status, setting up a new company, or experiencing another major change. Family changes can be a reason for solo practitioners to visit a tax professional, too — undergoing a divorce or getting married may also be a reason to revisit your taxes, particularly if one of these changes represents an ownership or partnership change.

- **Tax overhauls:** With major changes to the national tax system occurring for the 2018 tax year, it may be a good time to visit a tax pro and see if these regulation changes impact you. Local and state tax changes happen too, so it's a good idea to research these changes and seek out professional input.

- **Personal preference:** If you aren't comfortable with doing taxes or if you don't have the time to do it yourself, seeing a pro is the answer. And with the complexity involved in preparing business taxes, it's a good idea anyway.

Plan ahead now so you don't have as much stress when tax time comes around.

KAITLIN MORRISON is a freelance writer in Washington, and she specializes in health care and technology issues. A frequent contributor to this magazine, she can be contacted at kaitlin@kaitlinmorrison.com, or through kaitlinmorrison.com.

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“QUIT THE WRONG STUFF, STICK WITH THE RIGHT STUFF. HAVE THE GUTS TO DO ONE OR THE OTHER.” How many people do you know who are good at prioritizing? Of those people who are good at prioritizing, how many of them are living a remarkable life? There is a direct correlation between prioritizing with discipline and fortitude and being remarkable.

School — especially graduate school — does very little to cultivate mastery. It teaches you the vocabulary and terminology of your chosen field. As a result, you must spend 80% of your time on 20% of your coursework. That sounds strange, but it’s unrealistic to truly own anything more than 20%. By focusing 80% of your time on the 20%, you will master that 20%.

The way you adapt this principle to the unique situation you find yourself in is different for everyone. Here are some suggestions:

Get your priorities in order
Make a list of all your courses, extracurricular activities, and social and family requirements. Number your list and then prioritize the top 20%. For example, if you have 25 things on your list, choose five to focus 80% of your time on. I recommend using a different color for each priority and then adding up the amount of time you spend on each. The biggest question I get about this strategy is about attending class. If attending class is correlated to learning, then you must attend your classes. If you can spend time in your highly-productive study space to learn the class material in less time, then do that.

Remember that your teacher has probably taught this material hundreds of times and will know more about what’s important than you. Passing classes is important, but learning the material is more important. A lot of coursework is repeated, so if you learn it well the first time, you don’t have to relearn it for each test and you can build on your knowledge base.

The biggest challenge you will face is that you have been taught to fear failure. No one can do it all. Choose to succeed at things that will have maximum impact.
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Focus on the fundamentals
Tony Robbins is known for saying most people overestimate what they can do in six months and underestimate what they can do in six years. It's essential that you focus on the fundamentals.

To begin this journey, you will need to identify what results you are striving for. In the end, results are all that count. Hard results are what advance your career and the profession as a whole. This could include getting media coverage, doing research and securing an associate position. It's like running a marathon — you must know the beginning of the race, the end of the race, and what you will need to complete it.

This journey toward becoming a doctor is not much different. Every choice will be measured against the results you aspire toward. At the risk of oversimplifying this journey you're on, these are the fundamentals:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Patient education
- Job acquisition or networking

Your mastery of these components will provide you with the fertile ground you will need to be remarkable. Each one of these fundamentals is a necessary step on your journey.

Focus on the goal
Your ultimate goal as a chiropractic student is to develop the skills that will either help you open a highly successful business or get you hired as an associate. First, reduce every decision to its simplest form, identifying whether it helps you achieve these goals; then you can add back in the details — like the type of practice you want to open and the type of associate position you want.

It is hard to be objective. You make decisions based on whether your friends are doing it. By staying focused on the fundamentals you are working on at any given time, you can say no to opportunities that are not right for you. That is why it is important to stay focused on the fundamentals and a specific objective within that category. The take-home message is to do less and to do it well.

Overcoming setbacks
The most common recipe for failure is to focus on too many things at one time. By staying focused on one objective, you can evaluate opportunities clearly. Remember that many opportunities will arise again at the precise moment you are ready for them. Do not take them before their time. Most chiropractic students do the opposite.

It's human nature to love novelty and tricks. You might love this idea of learning 100 new things. It takes effort to embrace one thing for an extended period of time. But complexity and novelty will distract you from what is important. It's similar to pseudo-busyness or pseudo-studying. If you can't describe something simply, then you probably don't understand it.

Every chiropractor I've met who has been practicing for more than 50 years uses simple concepts to describe what they are doing. There is no mention of nociception and c-fibers and the dorsal nerve root ganglion. So practice slowing down and explaining things simply.

Develop complexity when it counts
After focusing on the fundamentals, you will have to combine all of these skills in a way that helps you get the results you want. In order to be remarkable, you need to learn to do an effective exam, diagnose the problem, and apply an effective treatment, all the while communicating what you are doing and building trust with the patient.

In order to get great outcomes with patients in a reasonable amount of time, you must have the requisite technical skills. Your knowledge of anatomy, physiology, diagnosis, treatment and communication are the fundamentals, and you will sequence them in a complex way in order to customize your treatments to the patients you are working with.

All through high school and college, I worked in kitchens as a prep cook, line cook and chef. A chef can take the identical ingredients as an amateur cook and sequence the preparation in a way that creates a delicious meal. This is the same idea. When you know the fundamentals, you can use complexity. The more difficult cases you solve, the more career currency you will be developing.

Excerpted with edits from The Master Student, Book 1, Mindset, The Ultimate Guide to Success, Enjoyment and Productivity as a Chiropractic College Student, by NOAH VOLZ, DC, available on amazon.com. He can be contacted at drnoahvolz.com.
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**POINT**

**Advantages of a professional LLC**

While S corporations remain the most popular type of entity, the limited liability company (LLC) introduced in 1997 is fast becoming the entity of choice among many professionals and businesses. An LLC is a hybrid entity, bringing together some of the best features of both partnerships and corporations.

LLCs were created to provide business owners with the liability protection that corporations enjoy without the downside of double taxation. The earnings and losses of an LLC pass through to the owners and are included on their personal income tax returns.

Although similar to an S corporation, an LLC has no limit on the number of shareholders. In fact, any “member” or shareholder of the LLC is allowed a full participatory role in a chiropractic practice’s operation. To set up an LLC, articles of organization must be filed with the secretary of state where the practice or business will operate. Some states also require the filing of an operating agreement, which is similar to a partnership agreement.

**Limited shelf life**

As is the case with partnerships, LLCs do not have perpetual life. Some states stipulate that the operation must dissolve after 30-40 years. Technically, an LLC dissolves whenever a member quits, retires or dies.

Changing circumstances, changes in tax law, and even the success of a practice can — and should — prompt a reassessment of the type of taxable entity a chiropractor and his or her practice operates as. It makes sense to ensure you are using the best entity to provide your practice and yourself with the most liability protection, benefits, and consistently lowest tax bill possible.

**MARK BATTERSBY** is a tax and financial adviser, freelance writer, lecturer and author located in Philadelphia. He can be reached at 610-789-2480.

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**COUNTERPOINT**

**Advantages of an S Corp.**

Most chiropractors start as sole proprietors, then, as they grow, establish a limited liability company or corporation to help protect them from business liability. But picking the right entity involves all sorts of tax considerations as well:

- **An S corporation** is a corporation that elects not to pay tax itself. Instead, it files an informational return and passes income and losses through to shareholders according to their ownership.
- **A limited liability company (LLC) or professional limited liability company (PLLC)** is an association of one or more “members” organized under state law. Your liability for business debts is limited to your investment in the company, and LLCs/PLLCs may offer the strongest asset protection of any entity. Single-member LLCs are taxed as proprietors, unless you elect to be taxed as an S or C corporation. This flexibility makes LLCs the entity of choice for chiropractic practices.

If you’re an LLC/PLLC taxed as a sole proprietor, you’ll report your net income on Schedule C. You’ll pay tax at whatever your personal rate is. But (for 2019), you’ll also pay self-employment tax of 15.3% on your first $132,900 of “net self-employment income.”

**Why the S corporation is so attractive**

You’ll only pay the 15.3% employment tax on your declared “reasonable wages.” But — there’s no Social Security or self-employment tax due on the dividend pass-through. And that makes a world of difference. According to IRS data, the average S corporation pays out about 40% of its income in the form of salary and 60% in the form of distributions. Ultimately this lowers your self-employment tax liability by as much as 60%.

**DON RASMUSSEN, CTS,** is a certified tax strategist/partner with Quartermaster Tax Management, LLC specializes in helping chiropractors throughout the United States. For more info go to chirotaxpro.com.
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The Chiropractic Marketing Manifesto from the Chiropractic Business Academy (CBA) is intended to help chiropractors build and strengthen their practices through effective, modern chiropractic marketing and proven business systems. Its primary focus is not on making lots of money — that may certainly happen, but as the result of the practice promoting and delivering great service to its patients.

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<td>888-326-6335</td>
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