

THE CLINICAL CHIROPRACTOR

SCHUBBE RESCH CHIROPRACTIC & PHYSICAL THERAPY • SPRING 2008

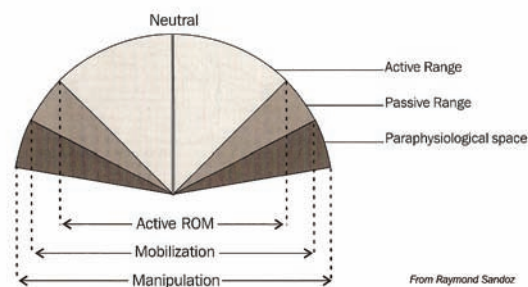
Understanding Chiropractic Manipulation

The terms “spinal manipulation” and “spinal manipulative therapy” are often used by laypersons and professionals to refer to all manual techniques used to treat muscles or joints. However, the following definitions have become distinct in health science literature with respect to treatment of joint disorders.

MANIPULATION VERSUS MOBILIZATION

MOBILIZATION. Slower or low velocity techniques in which the joint remains within its passive range of movement. The treatment can be monitored and resisted by the patient, who therefore has final control.

MANIPULATION. Faster or high velocity techniques that take the joint beyond the passive range end barrier to what is known as the parapsychological space. Range of movement is greater. Because of the speed, the patient does not have control.



Another way of explaining the difference is that manipulation is a sudden thrust or impulse of force applied at the end of the passive range of movement. This force gaps the joint to a degree that cannot be achieved by mobilization.

Although manipulation involves a sudden thrust of speed, it is over an extremely small range of movement similar to the movement in the joint when you crack your fingers. It is usually accompanied by a pop or a cracking sound. The technical term for this is “cavitation.” This is not made by bone, but is the sound of the collapse of a bubble of gas that escapes from the joint fluid because of low pressure when the two joint surfaces are separated.

In the words of chiropractors Dr. David Cassidy and Dr. Haymo Thiel and orthopedic surgeon Dr. William Kirkaldy-Willis (leading authorities in the field), “The phenomenon of joint fluid cavitation is central to the definition and the effect of manipulation.” The negative pressure that normally helps to hold the cartilage of the surfaces together is temporarily decreased allowing more freedom and greater passive range of motion. None of this usually occurs with mobilization.

The importance of the distinction between manipulation and mobilization is underlined by the growing body of research showing that manipulation has superior results with increasing range of motion in a joint and in treating back pain, neck pain, headache and extremity pain.

CHIROPRACTIC MANIPULATION AND SUBLUXATION

The term “subluxation” is used by chiropractors to depict the altered position of the vertebrae and subsequent functional loss. “Subluxation” has been defined medically as “a partial abnormal separation of the articular surfaces of the joint.”

Chiropractors believe subluxation is a process and not a static condition, a state of living tissue undergoing constant change. These changes include hyperemia, congestion, edema, minute hemorrhages, fibrosis, local ischemia, atrophy, and eventually rigidity and adhesions, which form not only in joint capsules, but also in ligaments, tendons and muscles.

The term “adjustment” refers to the specific manipulation chiropractors apply to vertebrae that have abnormal movement patterns or fail to function normally. The objective of the chiropractic treatment is to reduce the “subluxation”, which results in an increased range of motion, reduced nerve irritability and improved function.

Some information provided by www.spine-health.com © 1999-2008 Spine-health.com. Additional information courtesy of “The Chiropractic Profession”, David Chapman Smith. This information is not intended as a substitute for medical professional help or advice, but is to be used only as an aid in understanding chiropractic treatment. A physician should always be consulted for any health problems.

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Positive Effects of a Chiropractic Adjustment

Objective effects of a chiropractic adjustment have been investigated and reported. More specifically, a single chiropractic adjustment produces both sensory and motor effects as well as sympathetic nervous system effects.

The sensory and motor effects of a chiropractic manipulation include:

- **Increased joint ROM in all 3 planes and reduction of pain**
- **Increased skin pain tolerance level**
- **Increased paraspinal muscle pressure pain tolerance**
- **Reduced muscle electrical activity and tension**

Sympathetic nervous system effects of a chiropractic manipulation include:

- **Increased blood flow and distal skin temperature (fingertips)**
- **Blood pressure reduction**



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Clinical studies have shown the positive impact of spinal manipulation. If you feel any of your patients would benefit from spinal manipulation, please call us at 920-738-0200 or visit www.schubberesch.com. Be assured, your patient will be referred back to you after we treat their condition.

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CHIROPRACTORS



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