

[Relapse]

Let's face it; in an ideal world you would make a quick and steady climb back to a better state of health and wellness. However, the road to recovery often includes a few setbacks. Going through a resurgence of your initial pain or symptoms can leave you feeling doubtful and disappointed. Let's explain why this is normal and why it happens.

The first thing we need to review is the purpose of chiropractic care. Remember, chiropractic is not a pill or medication you take for an ache or pain. Chiropractic allows you to get rid of nerve interference by removing subluxations from your spine through repeated adjustments. Once free of interference, your nervous system allows your body to self-heal and self-regulate, inevitably allowing you to get back to a healthier state. In other words, you will heal proportionately to the health of your nervous system, which is being helped with chiropractic. As you now know, what interferes with and affects the health of your nervous system is stress—physical, chemical and emotional.

I want you to think of when you started experiencing stress in your life, even before your symptoms showed up. Did you have a traumatic birth, a sports injury or car accident? Have you had a sedentary and perhaps stressful job, or a lack of commitment to an exercise regime and a healthy diet? I want you to realize how long stress has been there causing your body to work harder and to adapt. Looking at your life today, would you say that all of these stressors have been eliminated and you are living stress free? Of course not. I want you to realize that many of these stressors are still present in your life, causing your body to have to adapt everyday.

Cumulative physical stress causes structural changes to your spine and unhealthy muscle memory, creating momentum towards disease and sickness. It will take time to reverse this momentum. However, with regular chiropractic adjustments, muscle memory will change, structure and function will improve and return to a state of wellness, and your nervous system will become healthier, allowing you to better adapt to your present stress load and your environment.

This reminds me of a patient who had come to me for sciatica and had raging pain going down his leg. After a series of about 12 adjustments, he felt like he was back to normal. Despite my best efforts in educating him, this patient did not want to continue with care and felt that more adjustments were not necessary. Two weeks later, he shows up at my practice with severe pain in his lower back and leg again. He explained that the pain had returned during a long drive. It was now clear to him that the reason the pain had returned was that we had not yet fixed the cause of the problem. After all, his wife was in the same care, travelled the same distance and did not get the same pain. It was obvious that his spine had not been able to adapt due to the subluxations and dysfunction in his spine that we had not yet removed and fixed. Five years later, this patient is committed to wellness care, maintains his biweekly chiropractic appointments and has not had a relapse since.

Remember, you cannot get healthy with the same attitude that created your sickness.