



Chiropractic Miracles

Delivering You the Best Word in Wellness and Natural Health Care

Dr. Bennett and Dr. Ray's Breakthrough Patient Newsletter...

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Dear Patient and Friend,

We've all watched kids at play – they're fearless, hurling their bodies around, jumping back up from skateboard falls, bicycle collisions, football tackles or assorted trips and stumbles.

They may seem like they're rubbery and resilient, but too often, the jarring impact they suffer shows up later in life, as weaknesses or damage that can be traced back to childhood.

So what is a concerned parent's best course of action?

Never ignore a child's complaint – if your kid says something is bothering him or her, take it seriously, better safe than sorry, get it checked out.

Keep an eye on your kids while playing – sometimes they may sustain a pretty significant trauma, but they forget to tell you. Ask about any bruises, limping or other signs of injury – and be persistent, find out what happened.

And, bring your family to your chiropractor for periodic check-ups – if there's anything wrong, your doctor of chiropractic can find it and offer whatever corrective advice is called for.

Frequently, the health challenges and problems adults may face began with injuries in early life that were never addressed properly. Give your children an advantage – watch them closely through their developmental years, and get them checked regularly by your family chiropractor.

A Dozen Ways Caffeine Affects You

In the summertime, we are more likely to drink cold sodas, energy drinks and iced tea and coffee by the huge tumbler. This often increases the intake of caffeine, a substance that occurs naturally in coffee, cola and many other foods – or, you may just be accustomed to getting your day started with a cup of joe, with a few cans of Coke or Pepsi along the way.

What is caffeine? Caffeine is a crystalline compound found in many plants that acts as a stimulant to the brain and nerve system. Obviously, sometimes this can be desirable, and other times less desirable. Let's take a look at what happens in your body when you take in caffeine.

1. Caffeine increases the rate of your heartbeat. It raises your level of adrenaline, similar to what happens when you get into a stressful or exciting situation. For most this is nothing more than a temporary boost, but if you suffer from any heart symptoms, caffeine could accentuate them, and you should adjust your intake accordingly.
2. Caffeine helps to detoxify your liver and cleanse your colon, by quickening your metabolism.
3. Caffeine sharpens your attention span. It enhances alertness, concentration and clear-headedness. It wakes you up and energizes you. It dilates arteries, which allows more blood flow and therefore more oxygen to your cells, especially your brain, and so you feel more aware.
4. Caffeine may produce jitters or nervousness. If you tend to be an anxious person to start with, drinking too much, too often or on an empty stomach can make it worse.
5. Caffeine may improve your memory. Research at Johns Hopkins University related caffeine consumption to better mental acuity.
6. Caffeine may cause insomnia. It can take as much as eight to ten hours to purge residual caffeine from your system, so if you drink caffeinated beverages too close to bedtime, it can disrupt your sleep patterns.

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7. Caffeine is addictive. Three out of four regular caffeine users are physically addicted to it, which means that withdrawal will bring on craving, mood swings and irritability, similar to kicking any other addiction.

8. Caffeine may promote weight loss and prevent weight gain. The Mayo Clinic considers caffeine an appetite suppressant, meaning it reduces your desire to eat so you eat less. Because it increases your metabolism, it also helps you burn more calories throughout each day.

9. Caffeine raises your blood pressure. This can be an advantage for those who suffer low blood pressure, but if you tend toward hypertension, your health advisors may suggest skipping caffeine altogether.

10. Caffeine has a rapid stimulation effect. Many athletes take a caffeine supplement to improve performance during sports or workouts. Some report more endurance and the ability to train harder.

11. Caffeine can prevent certain types of headaches. Because it tends to widen arteries, those people who suffer from headaches that are caused by restriction of blood vessels, like some kinds of migraines for example, may avoid them or even find relief from them with caffeinated products.

12. Caffeine may increase some pregnancy risks. The March of Dimes recommends limiting caffeine in pregnancy, since women who consumed a significant amount of caffeine had a higher rate of miscarriage.

As you can see, the decision to include caffeinated foods and drinks in your diet carries a certain responsibility, to pay attention to how it is affecting you. Many of these effects are helpful or even constructive, but some of them are warnings to let you know you may be overdoing it, or that you may need to avoid such products entirely.

Parents, keep an eye on your kids' intake of caffeine beverages and foods, including chocolate. Excessive soda pop or iced tea may seem innocuous, but can interfere with your child's sleep, over-rev his or her metabolism, and even make his or her heart race. A few simple family guidelines will go a long way – don't be afraid to draw a few lines in the sand, it's for your family's overall well-being.

Like all foods, caffeine is a mixed bag, some benefits, some consequences, stronger effects on some people and not as strong on others – use it appropriately, and most have nothing to fear. And if you want to know more about the effect of caffeine or need advice on any other nutritional decision, just ask your doctor or chiropractic.

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Why is Spinal Screening Important?

As the new school year approaches, many school systems have mandated that all students need to have a spinal screening. Why have they chosen to create such a rule, and how does it help your child?

Spinal screenings are designed to identify imbalances with the shape and structure of your body, especially the bones in your back. Years ago, no one gave a second thought to the health of your spine – but now we know better.

Besides the better posture and more attractive appearance of a straight and healthy spine, there are health factors associated with poor spinal alignment, which may lead to pain, illness, or growth issues.

When someone has an abnormal curvature of the spine, it's called a scoliosis, one of the main things a spinal screening is designed to detect. In people who have a scoliosis, you might see a discrepancy between the height of the right and left shoulders or hips, a tilt of the head, or uneven shoe wear.

Why is it important to get a spinal screening? Most people don't realize that the spine isn't a bone – it's a system of interlocking bones, which form the framework of your body. Not only do these bones serve as the connection points for muscles and ligaments so you can move, but they also play the essential role of protecting your delicate brain and nerve system, the control mechanism of your body.

So, spinal health has a direct relationship with the way your body works overall, and that's why it's so critical to get regular examinations, no matter how old you happen to be.

Schools often have their nurses or gym teachers do their spinal screenings – no offense intended to these outstanding public servants, but you'll get a more complete examination if you visit your family chiropractor, who looks at spines all day, and is your neighborhood spinal expert.

Even if your state does not require spinal screenings, be smart – go to your doctor of chiropractic, and get yourself and your family screened for scoliosis or any other spinal health problems. You may be avoiding a serious health issue, or just securing the peace of mind of knowing you and your kids are okay.

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