



MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release

Beneficial, effective health care

Over 800,000 Albertans seek treatment from a Doctor of Chiropractic each year

Edmonton, AB, June 19, 2008 – Chiropractic health care is a beneficial and effective treatment option that provides thousands of Albertans with relief from pain and dysfunction said the Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC) today in response to a call for limits to be placed on vertebral adjustment (also termed manipulation) of the neck.

“In comparison with many other common health care interventions, chiropractic adjustment is one of the safest and lowest risk options,” said ACAC president, Dr. Clark Mills. “Side effects from chiropractic adjustment are typically minor and resolve quickly.”

The most recent research into neck adjustment further supports the safety record. The results of a collaborative and multidisciplinary six-year study by the *Bone and Joint Task Force on Neck Pain and its Associated Disorders* into the causes, prognosis and treatment of neck pain were published in the peer-reviewed journal *Spine* in January 2008. The study concludes that Vertebral Basilar Artery (VBA) stroke is a very rare event in the population. The research indicates clearly that the risk of VBA stroke associated with a visit to a chiropractor’s office appears to be no different from the risk of VBA stroke following a visit to a physician’s office.

The study concludes that this type of stroke commonly begins with neck pain and/or headache which causes the patient to seek care from their chiropractor or family physician before the stroke fully develops.

Similarly, a British study of more than 19,000 chiropractic patients encompassing over 50,000 cervical spine manipulations published in October 2007 in *Spine* found “no reports of serious adverse events.”

In Canada, a study conducted by the *Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES)* states, "The evidence to date indicates that the risk associated with chiropractic manipulation of the neck is both small and inaccurately estimated. The estimated level of risk is smaller than that associated with many commonly used diagnostic tests or prescription drugs." The study was published in 2001 in the medical journal *Stroke*.

“The call for a limit on adjustment of the neck is unfounded and based on anecdotal reports,” said Dr. Mills. “The body of published, peer-reviewed research internationally clearly supports the safety of this health care practice.”

Chiropractic is a regulated health profession in Alberta. Chiropractors deliver health services under a legislated scope of practice. In Canada, chiropractors require a minimum of seven years of post-secondary education: three years at an undergraduate university level including science pre-requisites followed by an additional four years of specialized training at an accredited chiropractic college.

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