

# Chiropractic

A Natural Therapy





# What is **Chiropractic**?



## **A primary health care profession with statutory regulation**

Chiropractic is a primary health-care profession that specialises in the diagnosis, treatment and overall management of neuro-musculo-skeletal conditions that are due to mechanical dysfunction of the joints and muscles.

The profession has statutory regulation through the 1991 , Chiropractic Law. It is illegal to practice as a chiropractor without being registered.

The Cyprus Chiropractic Association (CCA) is the association for chiropractors in Cyprus, requiring education to international standards and the highest levels of training and conduct from its members.

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## Diagnosis

Diagnosis is reached by integrating information obtained from observation and a thorough examination of the patient, including:

- Case history
- Physical examination (including vital signs)
- Standard orthopaedic and neurological tests
- Observation of posture to assess biomechanical stresses
- Examination of individual joints and related soft tissues
- X-rays, when clinically necessary

Upon completion of the examination, the diagnosis and a plan of management as well as potential risks will be explained to the patient and only after consent is gained will treatment be initiated.

## Treatment

Treatment consists of a wide range of manipulative techniques appropriate to the patient and his/her condition, designed to improve the function of the joints, relieving pain and muscle spasm. Such skilled manipulation is very specific and directed at individual joints in order to restore optimal joint and muscle function.

## Patient management

CCA chiropractors support the treatment they offer with individual advice about the patient's lifestyle, work and exercise, in order to help in managing the condition and preventing a recurrence of the problem.

## Conditions suitable for treatment

95% of back pain is mechanical in origin and can be treated by a chiropractor with full clinical responsibility for the patient, in a primary care setting. However, a letter of referral from the patient's medical doctor, together with details of any previous investigations, treatment or x-ray findings, is helpful and a report from the chiropractor will follow. Chiropractors treat patients from newborn to the elderly and conditions suitable for chiropractic treatment include:



## Conditions suitable for treatment (continue)

- Neck pain due to the posterior joint and ligament strain with referred pain and paraesthesia. This might involve nerve root irritation which could be discogenic or related to degenerated spondylosis.
- Migraine of cervicogenic origin.
- Tension headaches due to dysfunction of the upper cervical spine and muscle spasm.
- Thoracic spine pain with involvement of the costo-vertebral joints which might also affect other body systems.
- Disc herniations with nerve root involvement, tension signs and even mild neurological deficits.
- Low back pain due to facet and sacroiliac irritation, muscle strain, ligament sprains with associated muscle spasm and referred pain which might also affect other body systems
- Nerve root irritation due to lateral spinal canal stenosis with degenerative changes and even when there are signs of neurogenic claudication.
- Shoulder capsulitis and rotator cuff tendonitis, medial/lateral epicondylitis and carpal tunnel syndrome.
- Knee ligament sprains and minor meniscal tears
- Ankle injuries
- Dysfunction of the joints of the hands and feet. Peripheral joint problems can present as local problems but may involve the spine or a neighbouring joint and so may benefit from treatment of both areas.



## Education and Training

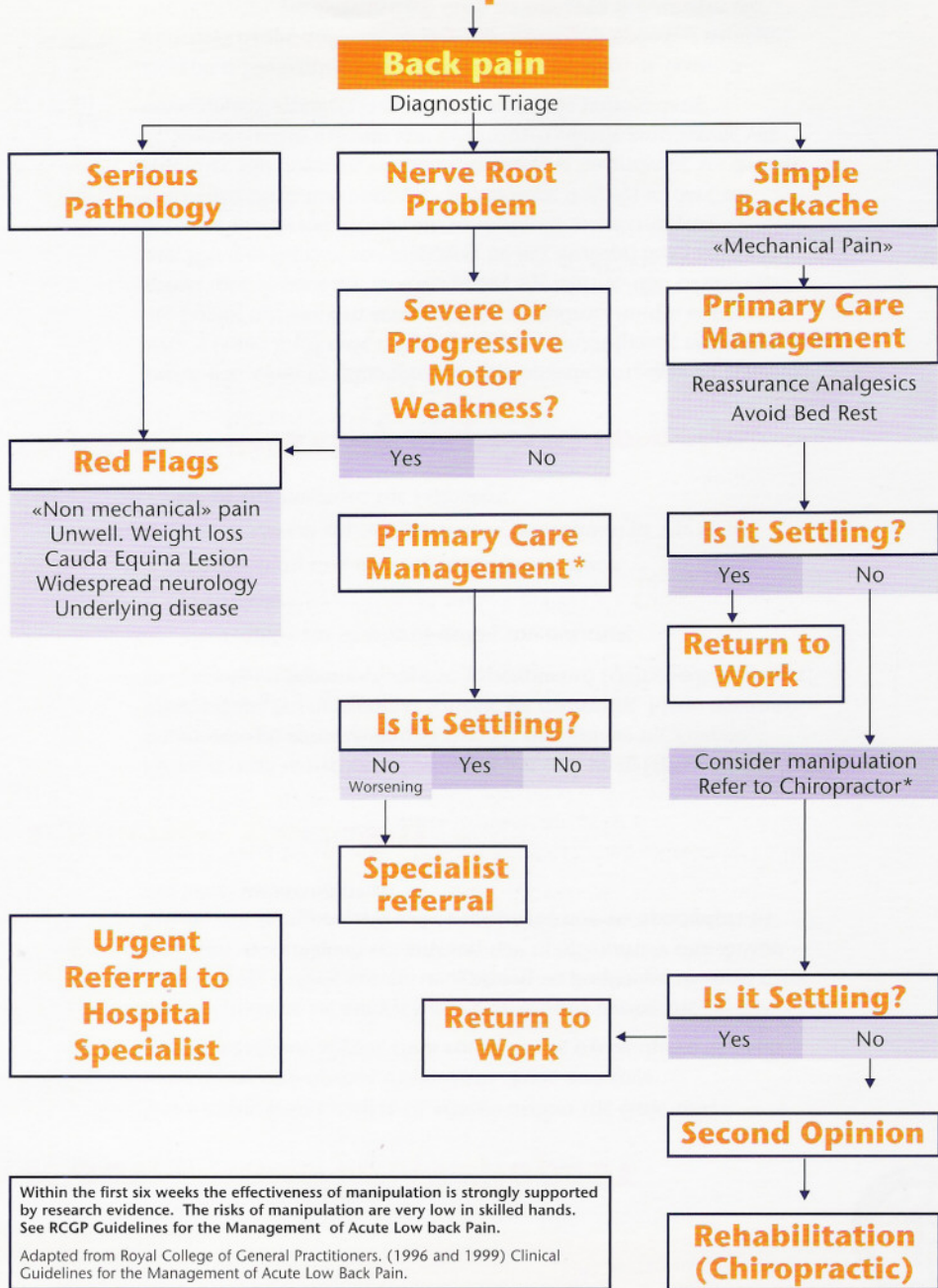
The title of a chiropractor is protected by law and as a result only chiropractors who are registered by the Ministry of Health and are full members of the Cyprus Chiropractic Association (CCA) can call themselves Chiropractors. The CCA has set the standards of education in chiropractic; all chiropractors must have graduated from an accredited institution and passed a test of competence as prescribed by the CCA/LAW before being accepted onto the register.

The CCA only accepts graduates who have undertaken a full-time internationally-accredited course. The CCA-accepted degree education (5000+taught hours) covers in-depth training in a variety of subjects including life sciences, radiology, orthopaedics, neurology, biomechanics, clinical medicine and differential diagnosis. Chiropractic undergraduates are taught to diagnose pathology and identify contraindications to treatment. They also undergo practical training in adjustment and supervised clinical training, where they have hands-on practice in treating patients.

Graduates who are members of the CCA undertake an additional year of supervised clinical practice as a requirement of membership, and there are many opportunities for chiropractors to study for postgraduate specialist qualifications up to a PhD level.

The CCA will be introducing a mandatory requirement for chiropractors to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) as a condition for re-registration on an annual basis.

# What is back pain due to?



Within the first six weeks the effectiveness of manipulation is strongly supported by research evidence. The risks of manipulation are very low in skilled hands. See RCGP Guidelines for the Management of Acute Low back Pain.

Adapted from Royal College of General Practitioners. (1996 and 1999) Clinical Guidelines for the Management of Acute Low Back Pain.