

# INFORMED CONSENT FOR CHIROPRACTIC CARE

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To the patient (or their parent, legal guardian, court appointed conservator, or agent): Please read this entire form prior to signing it. It is important that you understand the information contained in this form. Please ask any questions prior to signing this form if you are unclear about anything in this form.

## **Chiropractic Adjustments-**

The primary treatment rendered by the Doctor of Chiropractic to you will be chiropractic adjustments, which are purposely intentioned movements of bones with the desired effect being to remove interferences to nerves, which then allows your body to use its innate ability to heal itself. Chiropractic adjustments also have the desirable effect enabling muscles, tendons, and ligaments to properly function and heal, and also allows blood flow to properly occur. Chiropractic adjustments can be made by either the use of hands or mechanical instruments to any bone or joint in the body including both spinal and extremity bones. You may or may not hear an audible sound, which is just air being released from the joint space as bones are moved into their proper positions.

## **Other Procedures-**

There are a number of other procedures used by Doctors of Chiropractic that may be used on you. A physical examination will be performed to obtain a baseline level of functioning as well to partially determine an appropriate course of treatment and associated recommendations. The physical examination may include posture checks, range of motion testing, muscle strength testing, various neurological and orthopedic testing, and other testing. Radiology is the use of x-rays on the human body and is used to gain an inside perspective of the human body that cannot be obtained from a physical examination. Treatment may include chiropractic adjustments, physical therapy (such as ultrasound, interferential therapies, massage therapy, exercise recommendations, etc.). Additionally, there may be referrals to other doctors as necessary, and their treatment should involve the same informed consent with disclosure of risks and benefits as is being done here. For example, there can be permanent pain as a side effect of surgery as one possible consequence of that procedure.

## **Potential Benefits of Chiropractic and Associated Care-**

The vast majority of chiropractic patients tend to achieve good to excellent improvement in their physical conditions with chiropractic care. Improvement can be measured in many different ways, including reduction in pain, increased range of motion, less stiffness, increased athletic performance, and other ways. It must be remembered that different people get different results; different people have pre-existing conditions, and are of different ages and occupations (with different types of physical stress). Your situation is unique, and no guarantees are given. You will have to determine what results you get for yourself and report them to your Doctor of Chiropractic.

## **Material Risks Inherent with Chiropractic Adjustments and Other Treatment-**

As with any healthcare procedure, there are certain complications which may arise when chiropractic adjustments and other care/procedures are performed. These complications include but are not limited to fractures of bones, disc injuries, dislocations, muscle strains, cervical myelopathy, strokes, radiation exposure, costovertebral strains and separations, and burns. Some patients feel some stiffness and/or soreness following the first few days of treatment. The physical exam can temporarily worsen symptoms, but is a necessary part of chiropractic care. The Doctor of Chiropractic will make every reasonable effort during the examination to screen for contraindications to care, but remember it is your responsibility to inform the Doctor of Chiropractic of any conditions that would not otherwise come to their attention.

## **Probability of Risks Occurring-**

Fractures are rare occurrences and generally result from some underlying weakness of bone. Even though a competent history, examination (which may include radiography) will be performed, it is still possible for some weakness of bone to be undetected. Extremely rare are strokes from vertebral artery dissection which also occur in about one person in 133,000 in general (not related to chiropractic), but are estimated to occur in between one in one million and one in five million cervical adjustments. Although discs are generally helped with chiropractic care, they can be worsened even to the point of requiring surgical care although this rarely occurs). Physical therapy can sometimes burn skin by irritating it, although this is unlikely to occur.

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A perspective on the risks of chiropractic care as compared to medical care can be seen by the money paid by different doctors for a \$1,000,000 malpractice liability policy. The following annual premiums listed are close approximations, although not exact. A general medical doctor pays about \$20,000 per year, an internal medicine specialist pays about \$50,000 per year, and a medical specialist such as surgeons, cardiologists, and obstetrics and gynecologists (OBGYN) pay about \$150,000 per year for a \$1,000,000 malpractice liability policy. In stark contrast to medical doctors who patients encounter significant more risk that Doctors of Chiropractic, Doctors of Chiropractic in California pay about \$1,600 per year. Also, it has been reported that about 187,000 deaths occur every year from medical malpractice, but that the number for chiropractic is typically zero per year.

## **Consequences of Not Obtaining Chiropractic Care-**

Not obtaining chiropractic care will have the effect of not obtaining its benefits such as having your body function at its best ability, reducing pain, peak athletic performance, etc. Not obtaining chiropractic care may allow formation of adhesions and reduce mobility which may set up a pain reaction further reducing mobility. Over time this process may complicate treatment making it more difficult, requiring more time (and money), and less effective when chiropractic care is obtained later in time. Not obtaining chiropractic care following trauma such as whiplash or other effects of automobile accidents will cause injured muscles, tendons, and ligaments to heal improperly and be significantly weaker and more prone to re-injury as compared to receiving proper chiropractic care.

## **Alternatives to Chiropractic Care-**

Other treatment options for your condition may include rest, acupuncture, physical therapy, medical care, medications (both over the counter and prescribed), hospitalizations, surgery, and others. If you chose to use other treatment options, you should discuss the risks and benefits with your medical doctor or other health care provider.

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM UNTIL YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS FORM. UPON DOING SO, PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION AND SIGN THIS FORM.

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Signature of Patient

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Date Signed

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Patients Printed Name