

# Medical Journal Recommends Spinal Manipulation as a Primary Treatment for Low Back Pain

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The Annals of Internal Medicine recently published an article offering new guidelines for treatment of low back pain highlighting spinal manipulation. In the full guideline titled, “Noninvasive Treatments for Acute, Subacute, and Chronic Low Back Pain: A Clinical Practice Guideline” from the American College of Physicians, authors reviewed studies related to non-surgical treatments for adults with low back pain including the use of medications as well as other noninvasive treatments. Based on this literature review, they determined “Surgery is rarely needed for patients with low back pain.”

Instead, they recommend that patients discuss alternative treatments with their doctor. For acute (pain lasting less than 4 weeks) and subacute (pain lasting 4-12 weeks), their suggestions include: heat therapy, massage, acupuncture and SPINAL MANIPULATION. They recommend that medications such as ibuprofen or muscle relaxers be discussed if these treatments do NOT work.

For chronic pain, recommendations include exercise, rehabilitation therapy, acupuncture, motor control exercises (exercises to strengthen the back muscles), low-level laser therapy, and SPINAL MANIPULATION. Again, they do not recommend medications until other options have been tried and failed to offer pain relief. They specify that “Opioids should be considered only if no other treatments work and only if there are more benefits than risks for an individual patient”.

Since its inception, the chiropractic profession has provided a conservative alternative to medications and more invasive procedures. As research methods advance, the solid evidence for the safety and efficacy of chiropractic has grown. These new guidelines represent a growing trend of the health care community to recognize the benefits of conservative care, such as chiropractic, especially for patients with back pain. The chiropractic profession encourages those making health care choices to consider “chiropractic first, medications second, surgery last.”

Every patient is different and specific treatment must be geared to the patient’s diagnosis, overall health, lifestyle and risk factors. Your doctor of chiropractic can offer spinal manipulation as well as therapies and exercises to help you obtain safe and effective pain relief without the risks that are associated with many medications and surgical procedures. Talk to your doctor about what treatment is best for you.

SOURCE: “Noninvasive Treatments for Acute, Subacute, and Chronic Low Back Pain” published at Annals.org on 14 February 2017. Summary by The Tennessee Chiropractic Association.