



WEBER CHIROPRACTIC OFFICE, S.C.
Providing Choices in Complimentary Health Care
Gentle Chiropractic Therapy – Acupuncture – Rehabilitation –
Low Level Laser – Nutrition



I Think I Have A Rib Out

Patients who have experienced this condition once, never forget the classic symptoms that occur when the **costotransverse joint** sprains or becomes misaligned. These are the joints formed by the rib meeting the vertebra about 1 ½ inches away from the middle of the thoracic spine, which extends from the base of the neck to the lowest rib. There are **twelve ribs** on each side and each one can cause trouble. On our pain drawing, the patient typically draws a circle between the spine and the shoulder blade. Frequently the pain comes on rapidly; feeling like a knife was thrust into the back, at times resulting in difficult breathing. The pain may also refer to the front of the body and if on the left side, may feel like a heart attack. Pain may also travel along the rib to the side of the body.

The **most common cause** of this sprain is reaching out and lifting, creating a torque on the rib joint. Sometimes the cause is not obvious and may just slowly come on. If left untreated, the initial pain will gradually subside but never really go away and with the slightest move, the intense pain returns. I have seen this cycle occur over and over in patients, lasting over two years. The diagnosis is frequently missed. The good news is that, once recognized and treated appropriately, the condition can be resolved in two to three weeks in most cases. This is done with specific manipulation to restore the alignment of the joint followed by ultrasound physiotherapy or low level laser therapy and ice to decrease local inflammation. Often the pain goes away before the problem resolves so it is imperative that the rib sprain be completely healed before discontinuing treatment.

One recent patient, a 13 year old, who fell playing basketball last November, had ongoing pain in the right upper back and into the shoulder, affecting any use of the right arm or shoulder, especially overhead movements. She had seen other doctors without any help and given the typical ibuprofen. Besides restoring normal alignment to two levels of ribs, the shoulder joint and collar bone were also misaligned, creating further stress to the area and needed to be treated. In four visits, the pain was gone and the patient resumed normal, pain-free activities.

Spring Tune-Up Time

It's been another long winter and typically we aren't as active, leading to muscle inactivity around the spine, creating a **few kinks** that just won't go away. Before starting yard work, playing golf, and becoming more active, it's a good idea to come to the office and get those tight joints loosened up. This will help avoid bigger problems and longer down time when you want to be doing things. Maybe it's a tight lower back or neck, a pesky rib, sore shoulder or knee that needs attention. Remember the six most dangerous words – **"I thought it would go away"**.

Two Clarifications

As most of you know, my typical means of applying manipulation is using the Activator or Impulse instrument. Recently a patient inquired why I don't use the "old" way of "cracking". Well I do use the "old" way many times and if you prefer that approach, **just let me know**. I actually taught that approach at the National College of Chiropractic. Instrument manipulation just allows me to be more specific in certain situations and is gentler in the neck region.

In the Christmas newsletter, I touted the health benefits of red wine, as well as the dangers of sugar. Well one patient brought up the point that much of the wine in this area is home made and loaded with sugar and he wasn't sure what to think. The red wines I was thinking of were the merlots, cabernets and pinot noirs that have only natural sugar from the grapes so, be careful!

***Again, thank you for being our patient!
We appreciate you and look forward to serving you.***

David J. Weber, D.C., D.A.B.C.O.

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