

VAN DAM CHIROPRACTIC

Dr. *Scott A.* VAN DAM



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1203 28th St S - Fargo, ND 58103 - 701.532.5320 - vandamchiropractic.com

FROM HEAD TO TOE: CONDITIONS SURPRISING HELPED BY CHIROPRACTIC

It's Not Just About the Back

People often walk into a chiropractic office expecting neck or low back pain to be the main reason for their visit. That assumption usually changes fast. One longtime patient once joked that chiropractic care became her "everything doctor" after her wrist pain eased, her sleep improved, and her foot pain stopped flaring during morning walks. The spine connects to every part of the nervous system, and when spinal joints move better, the body often responds in unexpected ways. That connection explains why people notice changes far from the area being adjusted.

Chiropractors regularly hear stories that sound unrelated at first. A teacher noticed fewer headaches and better focus during the school day. A runner found that chronic heel pain eased after weeks of care. These experiences highlight how nerve communication influences muscles, joints, digestion, and even the body's response to stress.

Unexpected Areas Patients Often Notice Changes

Plantar fasciitis surprises many patients. Foot pain may start in the heel, yet nerve signals that control foot mechanics originate higher in the spine. When spinal motion improves, tension patterns through the legs can shift, often altering how the foot strikes the ground.



Carpal tunnel symptoms also appear in chiropractic offices.

Tingling fingers and wrist discomfort may be connected to nerve irritation in the neck and upper back. One graphic designer reported that night-time numbness improved after adjustments targeting her cervical spine and shoulders, not her wrists.

Parents frequently mention ear infections in children. Drainage from the middle ear relies on proper muscle function around the neck and jaw. When those areas

move freely, fluid buildup can lessen, leading to fewer repeat infections. Many parents report their children sleeping better and taking fewer sick days.

Digestive complaints also show up. Reflux symptoms sometimes calm when tension in the upper spine and diaphragm decreases. Nerves that help regulate stomach function pass through the thoracic spine, and improved motion there can support more comfortable digestion. Research has reported changes in reflux symptoms following spinal care (1).

Seeing the Body as One Connected System

Chiropractors hear these stories daily, often without patients expecting any change beyond pain relief. A retired carpenter once laughed while saying his hands felt steadier and his heartburn was quieter after starting care for shoulder stiffness. These changes do not seem random to chiropractors who have spent years studying how spinal joints and nerves influence the entire body.

The takeaway for patients is simple. Chiropractic care often reaches beyond sore backs and stiff necks. From feet to hands to digestion, people frequently notice shifts that improve daily comfort and function. Those results help patients appreciate that caring for the spine supports the whole body, not just one sore spot.



HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET ADJUSTED?

People ask this within minutes of meeting a chiropractor. How often should adjustments happen? The honest answer depends on what the body is dealing with and how long it has been there. A chiropractor often considers care by season rather than a single visit. Years of practice indicate that spines respond best when support matches the situation rather than following a calendar rule.

A patient presented after injuring his back while lifting mulch. He wanted a single visit so he could return to work. Another patient arrived with decades of stiffness and poor posture from desk work. Their schedules did not match, nor did their results.

When pain or stress shows up suddenly

Acute situations typically involve a brief period of visits within a limited time frame. This might follow a fall, a strain, or waking up unable to turn the head. In these cases, the body often requires closer support initially. Visits may be spaced a few days apart to reduce irritation and facilitate the return of bowel movement. As comfort improves, visits are naturally spread out. Many chiropractors observe patients' progress through this phase fairly quickly when they listen to their bodies and maintain consistent appointment schedules.

Corrective care takes patience

Longstanding patterns call for a different rhythm. This includes posture issues, recurring back pain, or stress that never seems to fully clear. A chiropractor often compares this phase to straightening teeth. Changes take repetition. Visits are more frequent over a longer period to help the spine relearn more appropriate movement and positioning. Patients sometimes feel improvement early, then notice deeper changes weeks later. That delayed shift often surprises them. Consistency tends to matter more here than intensity.

Wellness care is about preventing problems

Some people choose to have ongoing visits even when they feel well. Chiropractors often do the same for themselves. This phase typically involves fewer visits, typically once a month or every few weeks. The goal is support, not rescue. Many patients say these visits help them notice tension earlier, sleep better, or recover faster from daily stress. A long-time patient once joked that adjustments feel like routine maintenance for his nervous system. That comment sticks with many chiropractors.

Guidelines within chiropractic recognize these phases and support varied visit schedules based on need and response (2). The right frequency is rarely guessed. It is observed, adjusted, and shaped by the body's responses over time.



CAN CHIROPRACTIC HELP WITH HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

Blood pressure is not just a heart issue. It is closely guided by the nervous system. Signals from the brain travel through the upper neck and spinal cord to help regulate heart rate, blood vessel tension, and stress responses. When this communication flows well, the body adapts more smoothly to physical and emotional demands.

Upper cervical chiropractors often focus on the upper cervical spine because of its close relationship to the brainstem. This area influences the autonomic nervous system, which helps control blood pressure without conscious effort. When irritation or misalignment affects this region, the body may stay stuck in a stress response. That state often involves vasoconstriction and elevated blood pressure.



One chiropractor recalls working with a longtime patient who had struggled with elevated blood pressure for years. The patient noted that, after consistent upper neck care, routine home readings began to decrease. No promises were made, and no pressure was applied. The patient simply noticed a change over time that surprised both of them.

Upper Cervical Care and Cardiovascular Balance

Research has explored this connection. A well-known study published in the *Journal of Human Hypertension* reported that specific upper cervical adjustments were associated with meaningful reductions in blood pressure readings in people with hypertension. The changes were comparable to those observed with common medications and did not introduce anything into the body (3).

This type of chiropractic care does not focus on forcing change. The goal is to reduce interference so the nervous system can regulate itself more effectively. When the brain receives clearer feedback from the body, heart, and vessel control often becomes more efficient.

Patients often describe feeling calmer after upper cervical visits. Some notice improved sleep or less tension in their shoulders and jaw. These experiences matter because stress plays a strong role in blood pressure patterns. A nervous system that shifts out of a constant state of alert also allows the cardiovascular system to relax.

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Chiropractors are careful with language when discussing blood pressure. No claims are made regarding the cure of conditions. What is shared is an observation. When nervous system balance improves, many body processes respond positively. Blood pressure is one of them.

People exploring chiropractic care for blood pressure often do so after noticing how closely their stress levels and physical tension are linked. Upper cervical care offers a gentle approach that supports communication between the brain and body. For some patients, this support becomes evident when the cuff is applied during the next reading.

TRADITIONAL EATING

Nutrition for Strong Bones and Joints



Beyond Calcium

When people think about bone health, calcium usually gets all the attention. While calcium is important, it is only one piece of a much larger nutritional picture. Strong bones and flexible joints depend on a team of nutrients working together to support the spine, joints, and the entire musculoskeletal system.

One often overlooked mineral is magnesium. **Magnesium** helps regulate calcium absorption and supports muscle relaxation and nerve signaling. Without enough magnesium, calcium may not be properly utilized by the body. Many people fall short due to depleted soils and processed foods. Good sources include leafy greens, nuts, seeds, avocados, and mineral-rich water.

Another key nutrient is vitamin K2, which helps direct calcium to its proper sites. Calcium should be deposited into bones and teeth, not soft tissues. **Vitamin K2** activates proteins that guide calcium into bone structure, supporting strength and density. It is found in fermented foods such as natto, certain cheeses, grass-fed butter, and egg yolks.

Collagen is equally important, especially for joint health. Collagen is a primary building block of cartilage, tendons, ligaments, and connective tissue. As we age, natural collagen production declines, which may contribute to stiffness and joint discomfort. Bone broth, slow-cooked meats, gelatin, and collagen-rich cuts of meat provide the amino acids needed to support connective tissue resilience.

A lesser-known but valuable nutrient is silica. **Silica** supports collagen formation and helps maintain the flexibility and strength of connective tissues. It also contributes to bone mineralization. Foods such as cucumbers, bell peppers, bananas, oats, and herbs like horsetail can contribute small but meaningful amounts.

These nutrients work together to support posture, mobility, and spinal stability. The spine relies on healthy bones, discs, muscles, and ligaments to function properly. When nutrition is lacking, tissues may become weaker or less adaptable, making it harder for the body to maintain balance and movement efficiency.

A diet focused on whole, nutrient-dense foods provides the foundation for long-term bone and joint support. Combined with regular movement and chiropractic care that supports nervous system communication, proper nutrition helps the body maintain strength, coordination, and flexibility over time.

Strong bones and joints are not built on calcium alone. They are built through consistent nourishment that supports the entire musculoskeletal system from the inside out.

From all of us at Van Dam Chiropractic



Van Dam Chiropractic would like to thank you for the many referrals of friends and family to our office.

As a special Thank You, if you refer someone to Van Dam Chiropractic and they put your name down as the referral, Dr. Van Dam will send you a

\$10 GIFT CARD TO STARBUCKS

We know there are a lot of choices of doctors for your healthcare and we thank you for choosing us!

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