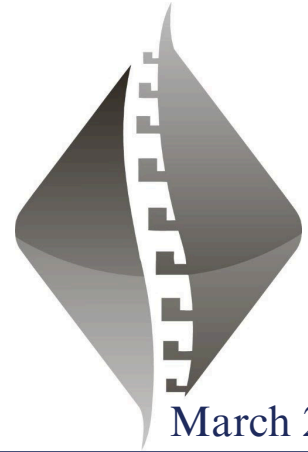


# VAN DAM CHIROPRACTIC

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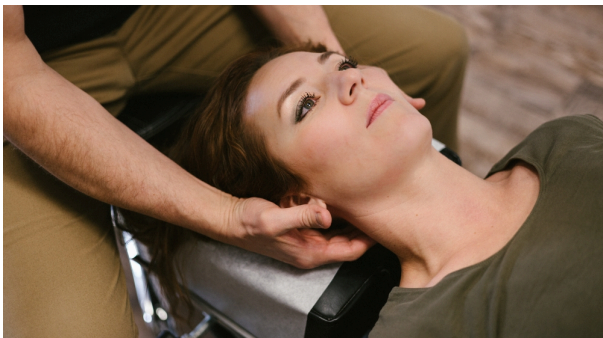
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## THE MIND, BODY, SPINE, CONNECTION

A patient once walked into the office saying her upper back felt like a steel rod. She had just come from a difficult meeting at work. Her shoulders were lifted, jaw tight, breathing shallow. Before any adjustment was given, her posture told the story. Stress had already written itself into her spine.

Thoughts and emotions do not stay in the mind. They show up in muscle tone, joint restriction, and nervous system tension. Anger often pulls the shoulders forward. Fear tightens the neck. Grief can collapse the chest. Over time, these repeated patterns create measurable changes in posture and spinal movement.

Research supports this connection. Chronic psychological stress has been shown to increase muscle tension and alter the balance of the autonomic nervous system, affecting heart rate, breathing, and pain sensitivity (1). When the nervous system remains on high alert, muscles guard, and joints stiffen. The spine adapts to that constant state of protection.



Chiropractors often notice that certain spinal patterns recur in patients under similar emotional strain. A parent caring for a sick child may present with mid-back tension and headaches. A business owner under financial pressure may show tight lumbar muscles and shallow breathing. The body keeps score.

### Stored Stress in the Spine

The nervous system runs through the spine. When spinal segments lose normal motion, nerve communication can become irritated. That irritation feeds back into muscle tone, which feeds back into posture. It becomes a loop.

Many patients report an emotional shift after an adjustment. Some feel lighter. Others say they can take a deeper breath. A few even become tearful without knowing why. When a restricted segment begins to move again, the surrounding guarding pattern often softens. Relieving tension in the body can quiet the fight-or-flight response.

This is not about chasing emotions. It is about restoring motion and balance so the nervous system can settle. When the spine moves freely, the body has a better chance of regulating stress rather than storing it.

### Clarity Through Alignment

Clear nerve communication supports clearer thinking. Patients frequently describe improved focus and calmer moods during regular chiropractic care. They sleep more deeply. Their posture changes without conscious effort. They stand taller and breathe fuller.

Emotional health is not separate from spinal health. Every thought produces a chemical signal. Every posture feeds back to the brain. Supporting the spine supports the person as a whole.

The mind and body speak constantly. Chiropractic care helps that conversation become less tense and clearer.



## CHIROPRACTIC DURING ALLERGY SEASON

Spring and fall often fill waiting rooms with the same complaints. Sinus pressure behind the eyes. Sneezing that will not quit. A foggy head that makes the day feel longer than it should. Many patients are surprised when their chiropractor asks about these symptoms during an adjustment visit.

The upper cervical spine sits close to the brain stem and the nerves that influence sinus tissues. When the top bones of the neck lose proper alignment, irritation in that area can affect muscle tone,



circulation, and drainage in the head and face. Gentle adjustments in this region aim to restore motion and reduce nerve irritation. Patients frequently report that their head feels lighter and their sinuses feel more open shortly after care.

Research has shown that spinal adjustments may influence immune system function by affecting the nervous system (2). That connection helps explain why some people notice fewer allergy flare-ups under regular chiropractic care.

One patient shared that every April, she would wake up at 3 AM with pressure across her forehead. She kept tissues on her nightstand and rarely slept through the night. During one visit, she mentioned it casually, assuming nothing could be done. After a series of upper cervical adjustments, she returned with a smile and said she had slept through the night for the first time in weeks. The sneezing had not completely vanished, but the intensity had dropped, and the pressure had eased.

Another patient described a constant drip in the back of his throat each fall. He noticed that when his neck felt tight from long hours at the computer, his sinus congestion worsened. As his spinal motion improved, so did his breathing comfort.

Chiropractic care does not target pollen or mold in the air. It focuses on how the body responds. When spinal joints move well, and nerve communication is clear, muscles around the sinuses can relax, making normal drainage more likely. Reduced tension in the upper neck may also ease headaches that often accompany seasonal allergies.

Many patients add regular adjustments to their spring and fall routines. They often report clearer breathing, less facial pressure, and better sleep. For those who struggle every year with congestion and inflammation, checking the alignment of the upper neck may be a simple step that supports the body's ability to handle the season.

## CHIROPRACTIC FOR JAW CLENCHING, STRESS & ANXIETY

A patient once mentioned that her jaw felt sore every morning. She assumed it was a dental issue. Her dentist gave her a night guard, which helped protect her teeth, yet the tightness in her face and the headaches at her temples stayed. During her visit, she admitted she had been under heavy stress at work and often caught herself clenching during the day.

Many people do not realize how quickly stress shows up in the body. The jaw is one of the first places it hides. When someone feels anxious, the nervous system shifts into a protective mode. Muscles tighten. Breathing becomes shallow. The shoulders creep upward. The neck stiffens. The jaw locks down. Over time, repeated clenching can irritate the temporomandibular joint, strain the small muscles around the skull, and trigger tension headaches.

Research has shown a clear association between psychological stress and increased jaw muscle activity, including clenching and grinding behaviors (3). That muscle over-activity does not stay isolated to the mouth. The jaw connects directly to the skull, the upper neck, and the nerves that influence balance and stress responses. When those areas are restricted, the body often stays on high alert.

Chiropractors frequently check the alignment and motion of the jaw, upper cervical spine, and upper back in patients who report anxiety, panic sensations, or chronic tension. Gentle adjustments in these regions can reduce joint irritation and calm muscle guarding. When the upper neck moves more freely, pressure on nearby nerves may decrease. Many patients report that after an adjustment, they notice deeper breathing and less tightness across the shoulders and face.

One middle-aged man described feeling as if his chest would tighten every Sunday evening before the work week began. He also wore down his molars



from nighttime grinding. After several visits focused on his jaw and upper spine, he shared that his Sunday evening episodes felt less intense. His wife noticed he was no longer grinding loudly at night. His work stressors had not changed. His body's response had.

Chiropractic care does not remove life's pressures. It can, however, help the nervous system shift out of a constant state of defense. When the spine and jaw move better, muscles can relax. When muscles relax, the brain receives fewer danger signals. Many patients find that this physical easing makes their anxiety feel more manageable and their sleep more restful.

If jaw soreness, headaches, or upper back tension accompany stress in daily life, it may be worth having the spine and jaw evaluated. Sometimes the body is asking for support in a place that is easy to overlook.

## RESEARCH AND CHIROPRACTIC

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO END TO THE CONDITIONS THAT RESPOND TO CHIROPRACTIC CARE – PHYSICAL AS WELL AS PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.

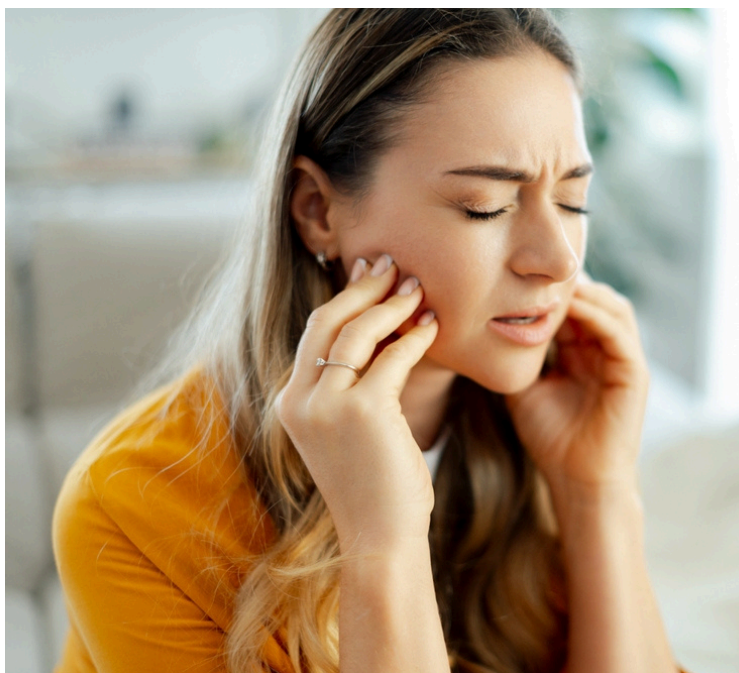
THAT IS BECAUSE CHIROPRACTIC DOES NOT “TREAT” A PARTICULAR CONDITION. CHIROPRACTIC CARE “TREATS” OR MORE ACCURATELY “CORRECTS” A SERIOUS INTERFERENCE TO



BRAIN, NERVOUS SYSTEM AND ENERGY FUNCTION KNOWN AS THE SUBLUXATION. NO MATTER WHAT CONDITION YOU OR A LOVED ONE MAY HAVE, YOU WILL ALWAYS FUNCTION BETTER WHEN FREE FROM SUBLUXATIONS. CHIROPRACTORS ARE UNIQUELY TRAINED TO LOCATE AND CORRECT SUBLUXATIONS. ENJOY THIS MONTH'S CASES AND SEE MORE NEXT MONTH.

### Chiropractic Care for Temporomandibular Joint Disorder (TMJ)

A 35-year-old woman presented with chronic temporomandibular joint dysfunction characterized by jaw pain, clicking during opening and closing, headaches, and difficulty chewing. Postural assessment revealed forward head posture and cervical spine dysfunction contributing to abnormal mandibular mechanics. Chiropractic management included specific cervical spinal adjustments, gentle TMJ mobilization, and targeted soft-tissue therapy to the masticatory and cervical musculature. Over an eight-week period, the patient reported a marked reduction in jaw pain and clicking, decreased headache frequency, and improved mandibular range of motion and function. This case highlights the interconnected relationship between cervical spine biomechanics, posture, and TMJ dysfunction. (4)



### Chiropractic Management of Chronic Otitis Media in a Child

A 5-year-old boy with a history of recurrent otitis media experienced repeated ear infections despite multiple courses of antibiotics. He presented with persistent middle ear effusion, irritability, and intermittent ear pain. Chiropractic evaluation identified cervical and upper thoracic segmental dysfunction that may have contributed to impaired eustachian tube drainage. Care consisted of gentle, age-appropriate spinal adjustments focused primarily on the upper cervical and thoracic regions. Over several weeks of treatment, the frequency and severity of ear infections decreased, middle ear fluid resolved, and the child's overall comfort and behavior improved. This case suggests that conservative chiropractic management may help address biomechanical factors associated with recurrent otitis media. (5)



*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*

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