



CALIFORNIA CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION

Doctors of Chiropractic: Who We Are

The practice of chiropractic focuses on the relationship between the structure and the function of the body and how that relationship affects the preservation and restoration of health. Some important background on our profession:

Cost-Effectiveness

- Doctors of chiropractic are focused on cost-saving care that returns patients to normal function.
- Prevention and wellness have been the cornerstones of chiropractic education and practice since its inception and doctors of chiropractic are conservative in their most frequently utilized health care interventions and provide less costly and effective care for patients.
- Chiropractic doctors treat patients without the use of expensive drugs or surgery.
- Volumes of independent studies find that chiropractic patients have better health outcomes, higher satisfaction with their care, and lower costs when compared to traditional health care providers.

Scope of Practice

- Doctors of chiropractic are trained and licensed to serve as primary care doctors.
- Doctors of chiropractic are educated to differentially diagnose all conditions of the human body.
- The treatment approaches used by doctors of chiropractic include manipulation of the spine and other joints; physiotherapy; dietary and nutritional counseling; exercise and rehabilitation, stress management and risk avoidance, along with advice about ergonomics.
- Chiropractic doctors are required by law to refer patients to another health care provider if a condition is detected that is not part of the chiropractic scope of practice.

Regulation

- In California, chiropractic has been a licensed profession since 1922.
- The state Board of Chiropractic Examiners provides oversight and enforcement.

Education

- Doctors of chiropractic begin their education with a minimum of 90 units of pre-med study at an accredited university.
- After undergraduate study, chiropractic students must earn a four-year doctorate degree with classroom and laboratory work in sciences, diagnosis and treatment procedures.
- Clinical education includes a year-long internship overseen by a licensed doctor of chiropractic.
- Annual postgraduate continuing education is required as a condition of licensure.
- In California, there are three accredited chiropractic colleges. They are Life Chiropractic College West in Hayward, Palmer College of Chiropractic West Campus in San Jose, and Southern California University of Health Sciences in Whittier.