



# Fitness:

## *How Chiropractic Can Help*

Efficiency—it's something we all look for in home appliances or cars. How much energy will this thing take to run? Does the system have any weaknesses? If it's a used car, we want to know if it's had its oil changed and if the parts have been properly cared for because we know that when one thing is imbalanced, the whole system becomes less effective. The truth is that regular maintenance—getting that tune-up, having that spine adjusted—can

play a significant role in overall fitness. When all systems are supported and functioning properly, we run, work, and play better.

Though it can be difficult to define, physical fitness refers to a state of overall health that includes the ability to perform a range of activities, from a hard workout to working comfortably at a job, with ease and efficiency. There are four interrelated types of fitness that contribute to complete health: muscular

fitness, which includes muscle strength and endurance; flexibility, which includes muscle/tendon elasticity and range of motion; cardio-respiratory fitness, which includes the heart, lungs, and blood vessels; and body composition, or the percentage of body fat to nonfat tissues such as bones and organs. Because no one system functions independently, the fitness of each affects all.

While it's important to get adequate exercise, eat right, and treat our bodies kindly to maximize health in all the above categories, regular alignment or maintenance through chiropractic adjustments can be the first step toward improving overall fitness. Because chiropractic works toward balancing the body's systems—bones, muscles, nerves, and organs—through proper posture and alignment, it allows the whole body to perform at its best, increasing energy reserves as it decreases the stress and fatigue that can result from improper alignment. By eliminating the headaches, mus-

cle tightness, low back pain, and nerve interference (or *subluxations*) that result from misalignment and increasing lung capacity, chiropractic helps the body become less limited in the types of and amount of movement it can perform well.

In fact, fitness icons such as Arnold Schwarzenegger and cyclist Lance Armstrong use chiropractic to maintain peak physical performance, and the trend is catching on among a number of professional athletes and sports teams. Many teams for the 2002 Winter Olympics were the first to employ an official doctor of chiropractic and they had some of the best showings ever. Coincidence? Correcting biomechanical faults and misalignments and treating injuries with hands-on work so that the athletes can return to play faster and better is what chiropractic care is all about. John Stockton, a former pro basketball player who turned to chiropractic to better his game says, "It's not just the adjustments, its balancing muscles and overall health." And after a recent skiing accident, Schwarzenegger remarked, "I had one of those miracle moments when you call a chiropractor. They care for you, and then days later you ski again like a champion on moguls."

Though it may feel like a miracle, the principle of chiropractic is simple. When the body is well aligned, muscles, joints, and ligaments function together with greater ease. Internal organs aren't hindered, and the lungs and heart are better able to do their jobs. Perhaps even more importantly, chiropractic care helps prevent injuries that can result from overtaxing a particular part of the body that may be compensating for those that aren't functioning as well. Through chiropractic the body gets a tune-up. We're ready to roll—more efficiently and with a greater sense of well-being.

*Dr. Randall Trester is a chiropractor with a special emphasis in chronic pain, injury and rehabilitation, and is certified in pre- and post-natal care. His passion is sharing the powerful effects that chiropractic care has on general health, athletic performance, and pregnancy. He has a family practice in Kitsilano at West 1st Chiropractic Wellness Centre, 3-1864 West 1st Avenue. Contact Dr. Trester at [www.drRANDALLtrester.com](http://www.drRANDALLtrester.com).*

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