

HEALTHLINK CHIROPRACTIC AND MASSAGE

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OUR CHIROPRACTORS

Dr Angela Zahra *BSc MCh*

Dr Sabina Leung *BSc MChiro*

Dr Tristan Foo *BChiroSc MChiro*

Dr Daniel Choi *BChiroSc MChiro*

Dr Scott Lee *BChiroSc MChiro*

Our chiropractors are all trained in manual and non manual adjusting and work together focusing on improving spinal, muscular and neural balance in order to reduce symptoms but ultimately improve the overall health of our patients.

MESSAGE THERAPISTS

Elliot Harris

Remedial Massage Therapist

OUR FRONT DESK STAFF

Rob, Mary, Isabel, Alison and Cooper

CLINIC HOURS AND SERVICES

Consultations are by appointment. We try very hard to adhere to appointments, however, the nature of chiropractic is that emergencies and circumstances sometimes mean we run behind time. Please feel free to call and check.

CHIROPRACTIC

Monday	10.00am – 7.00pm
Tuesday	10.00am – 7.00pm
Wednesday – Friday	10.00am – 7.00pm
Saturday	8.00am – 12.00pm

Your health is our concern but your responsibility. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let the clinic know as soon as possible, and be sure to make up your missed appointment. Cancellation fees apply to missed appointments or appointments cancelled without 6 hours notice.

YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024



CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES



UNDERSTANDING SCIATICA



RESEARCH DISCOVERIES



FOOD AND MOOD

Strategies for improving sleep and spine health

Your sleep habits play a crucial role in your spinal health. The position you choose, the mattress and pillow you use, and ensuring you achieve sufficient zzz's matter. These five tips may help you achieve better sleep and spinal health.

Choose the right mattress

Your mattress is crucial for spinal health. A medium-firm mattress is often recommended. The ideal option should support your spine's natural curves and alignment, providing both comfort and pain relief.

Choose the correct pillow

Pillow choice is as crucial as your mattress. For back sleepers, a thinner pillow is best for spinal alignment. Side sleepers benefit from a pillow that fills the space between your ear and shoulder. A cervical pillow designed to support your neck's natural curve is ideal. If you must sleep on your stomach, use the thinnest pillow possible or none at all.

Sleeping positions

Your sleep position is important as it affects spinal alignment and health. The best positions are on your back or side. For back sleeping, use a pillow under your knees to reduce spine pressure. For side sleeping, place a firm pillow between your knees to lessen strain on your lower back and hips. Avoid sleeping on your stomach, as it forces your spine and neck into unnatural positions.

Stay active and stretch

Regular physical activity and stretching are essential for spinal health and good sleep quality. Engaging in exercises that strengthen your core and back muscles can support your spine and reduce discomfort during sleep. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily, and incorporate stretches that target the neck, back, and legs into your daily routine.

Gentle stretching before bed can help relax your muscles and improve flexibility, making it easier to find a comfortable sleeping position.

The sleep environment

Create a sleep environment that encourages rest and comfort. Regularly inspect your mattress and pillow, and replace them as needed to maintain optimal support. Use soft, natural, breathable

bed linens. Keep your bedroom clean, uncluttered, and slightly cool, dark, and quiet to promote uninterrupted sleep.

Creating a sleep routine

Consistency is vital for good sleep. A regular sleep schedule helps to regulate your body's internal clock which leads to better sleep quality. Choose set bed and wake times and aim for seven to nine hours of sleep per night.

Create a calming bedtime routine by avoiding screens, caffeine, and heavy meals before bed. Instead, try relaxing activities such as reading or meditating or gentle stretching.

Adopting these simple sleep tips can significantly improve your spinal health and restorative sleep, leading to a healthier, more energetic life.

Try these simple tips to improve your spinal health, sleep, and vitality.



Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

The ins and outs of sciatica: understanding the basics

The sciatic nerve is the largest and longest nerve in your body. It forms from other nerves in the lower lumbar spine and tailbone, like tributaries feeding into a river.

Each side of your body has a sciatic nerve, which powers muscles in your thighs, legs and feet. These muscles allow actions like pushing off with your toes, extending and flexing your toes and feet, and tipping your feet outward. This incredible nerve enables activities like dancing, sprinting, jumping, and walking.

While the sciatic nerve itself doesn't cause sensation, its branches transmit feelings to your foot and lower leg. This connection explains why symptoms are often felt in these areas. Sciatica, by definition, only affects the sciatic nerve. Let's explore common causes and symptoms of this painful condition.

What causes sciatica?

One common cause of sciatica is intervertebral disc damage. The nerve roots that form the sciatic nerve originate in the spine and

pass near the discs. If a disc bulges or is damaged, it can press on these nerve roots, affecting the sciatic nerve downstream.

Another common cause is piriformis syndrome. As the sciatic nerve travels from the pelvis to the leg, it passes

near or through the piriformis muscle. If this muscle tightens excessively, it can compress and irritate the sciatic nerve, resulting in symptoms of sciatica.

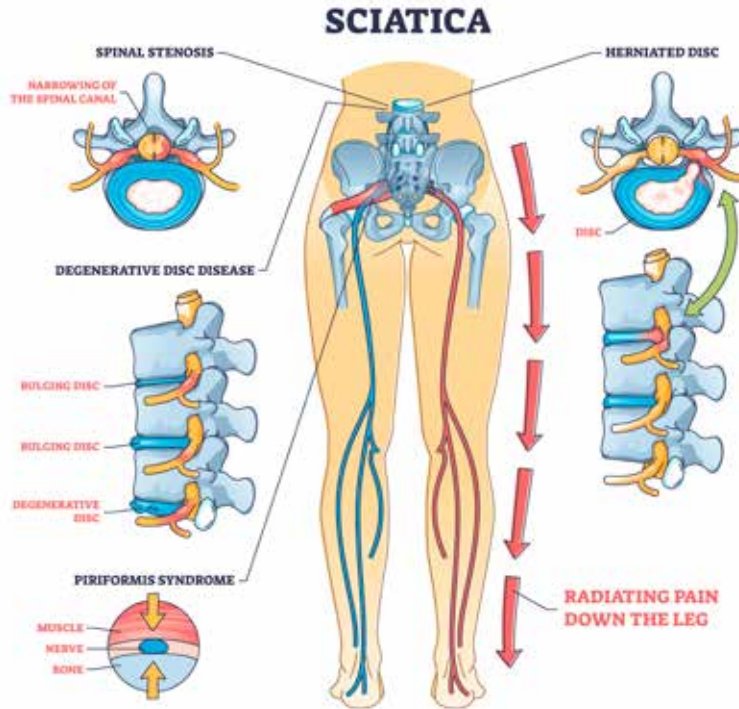
Symptoms and treatment

You may experience a variety of symptoms, but they typically include: sharp, severe pain in one leg, numbness and/or tingling that radiates to your foot or toes.

In cases involving disc issues, the straight leg raise test can increase leg pain. For piriformis muscle issues, pain may intensify with sitting.

Sciatica can be quite painful, but can resolve on its own - although this may take up to four to six weeks. However, some people continue to experience persistent pain, which can become problematic. If you experience symptoms of sciatica, seeking prompt assistance is advisable.

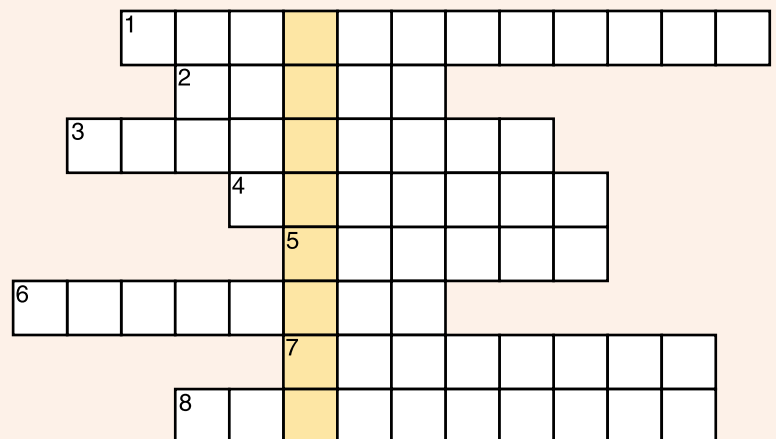
The first and crucial step is to obtain an accurate diagnosis. We will ask relevant questions, perform tests, and facilitate imaging if appropriate. This process helps you understand your condition, allowing us to make informed decisions about your treatment together.



HIDDEN CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Fill in the answers of the clues in the puzzle. Once you have done this, you will find the hidden word in the bold squares. Good Luck!

1. A type of headache caused by the neck
2. The bones down the center of the back that provides support for the body
3. A natural chemical produced by your brain
4. A nut which is a good source of healthy fats
5. Refers to the lower back area
6. A condition caused by pressure on the sciatic nerve
7. Refers to mid back area
8. A building block for serotonin



The hidden word is:

Answers can be found on the back page



Savoury tofu stir-fry with nutty brown rice

Here's a simple and healthy recipe for Asian-inspired tofu stir-fry.

Ingredients

- 200g firm tofu, drained and cubed
- 1 tsp of five-spice seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp grated ginger
- 2 cups mixed vegetables, sliced or chopped
- (such as red and green peppers, broccoli, carrots, and snap peas)
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 2 Tbsp. soy or tamari sauce
- 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar

Instructions

1. Gently toss the tofu cubes in a bowl with five-spice seasoning.
2. Heat oil in a large frying pan or wok over medium-high heat.
3. Add garlic and ginger, and sauté until fragrant.
4. Add tofu to the pan, cook for 5-7 minutes, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides.
5. Add mixed vegetables to the skillet and stir-fry for an additional 5-7 minutes, or until vegetables are tender yet crunchy.
6. In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce and rice vinegar. Pour mixture over the tofu and vegetables and stir, cook for another 2-3 minutes.

Serving suggestions:

Serve the stir-fry over cooked brown rice. Garnish with sesame seeds or sliced green onions if desired. Enjoy your nutritious and flavourful meal!

New insights on headaches and low back pain

Chiropractic care covers a wide range of approaches, from philosophy to practice and beyond. Research is essential for understanding our strengths and areas for improvement. Let's examine three recent studies on low back pain and cervicogenic headaches.



Low back pain is a common health issue among Australian adults, prompting numerous studies on treatment over the years, which have produced a range of results. Here's a recent finding:

A 2023 article published in the *Journal of Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine* compared data for the effectiveness of chiropractic and conservative care (E.G. cold pads, medications, physiotherapy, and rest), in treating low back pain. The researchers concluded that chiropractic care seemed more effective in reducing low back pain, increasing range of motion in lumbar spine, improving disability status, and enhancing general health.

Cervicogenic headaches are caused by issues in the neck. A randomised controlled trial published in the journal *PLOS ONE* in 2024 investigated the impact of spinal adjustments on these headaches:

Ninety-six participants were divided into

three groups: one received neck (cervical) adjustments, another received mid-back (thoracic) adjustments, and the third had conventional physiotherapy, including massage and targeted exercises. The trial concluded that cervical spine manipulation was more effective than the others in reducing pain intensity, headache frequency, and improving neck function and quality of life.

Research published in 2023 in *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice* supports these findings. The results of 17 randomised controlled trials (involving 1190 people), on the effectiveness of manipulative therapy for chronic neck pain were analysed. They showed that spinal adjustments reduced the degree of ongoing neck pain and disability.

While the studies mentioned provide valuable insights, it's important to consider that research outcomes can vary due to factors like sample size, study design, and methodology. Individual results may also differ based on personal health conditions, the specific nature of the treatment and other variables.

Therefore, we stress that what works for one person may not necessarily work for another. That's why our treatments are carefully tailored to each person's unique needs and circumstances. We look forward to supporting your health.

The power of serotonin: 6 foods to boost your mood, calm your mind

Have you ever wondered why a sunny day or chocolate can brighten your mood? The answer could lie in serotonin, a natural chemical found in our bodies. Let's explore its role and which foods may help serotonin production.



Serotonin and mood

Your brain produces serotonin, a natural chemical that's present throughout your body, and made from a protein called tryptophan.

Serotonin plays many roles in your body, including muscle movement, inflammation, and appetite. It works with melatonin to control sleep and is essential for mood regulation.

Low levels in your brain are linked to depression, digestive issues, and sleep disturbances.

When serotonin levels are balanced, you may feel happier and calmer.

Boosting serotonin with food

Certain foods are thought to help our bodies produce more serotonin, but more research is needed to fully understand this process. These foods support serotonin production and overall health:

1. Protein: lean protein like chicken, turkey, eggs, and tofu contain tryptophan, a building block for serotonin.
2. Complex carbohydrates: whole grains, brown rice, and quinoa help increase tryptophan absorption.
3. Healthy fats: Omega-3 fatty acids, found in salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds.
4. Colourful fruits and vegetables: especially bananas, avocados, and berries.
5. Nuts and seeds: almonds, pumpkin seeds, and sunflower seeds are excellent magnesium sources, supporting serotonin balance.
6. Dark chocolate: indulge in a small piece - it triggers the release of endorphins, making you feel happier.

By consuming serotonin-boosting foods, you're not just fuelling your body; you're improving your mood, sleep quality, and well-being.

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____
Date Time

Explaining cervicogenic headaches

There are a range of types of headaches, each with a different cause. A cervicogenic headache has specific causes and symptoms. “Cervico” refers to the neck, or more precisely the cervical spine. “Genic” means produced by. The literal translation is a headache caused by the neck.

What are cervicogenic headaches?

Cervicogenic headaches are caused by problems in your neck, such as muscle tension, joint issues, or nerve compression.

This type of headache is often confused with other types, such as migraines; however cervicogenic headaches cause distinct symptoms.

Pain from cervicogenic headaches typically begins in the neck and radiates upwards, often affecting one side of the head, face, or areas around the eyes. Unlike other headache types, cervicogenic headaches are linked to neck movements or positions. Stiffness or pain in the neck worsens head pain with specific neck movements.

Contributing causes

Several factors can contribute to cervicogenic headaches, including:

- neck injury: whiplash or other neck injuries
- poor posture: slouching or hunching, especially when your chin juts forward and your head is positioned ahead of your body instead of being upright
- osteoarthritis: degenerative changes in your neck joints
- nerve compression: pinched nerves in or near your neck
- neck stiffness: such as if you fell asleep in an awkward position.

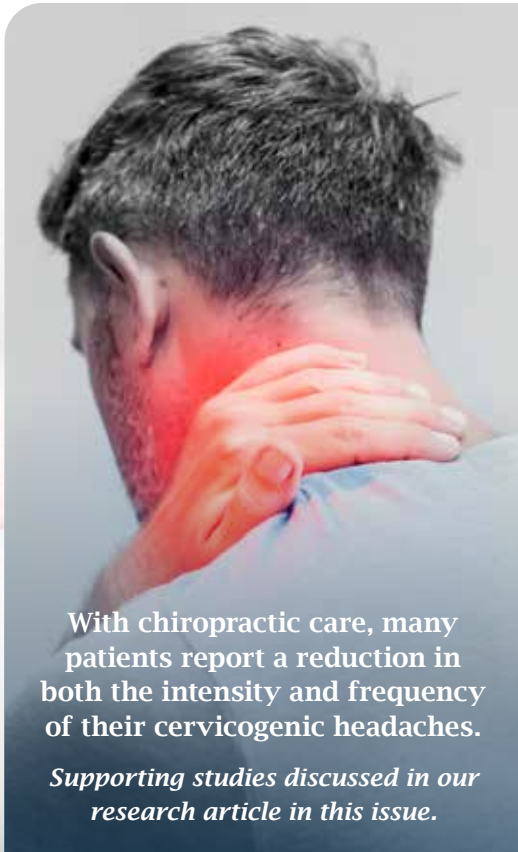
Chiropractic care

Effective treatment for headaches depends on identifying and addressing any underlying neck issues. This would typically involve a thorough examination to check for pain, joint issues, and neck movement and positioning. This helps determine whether your neck is the likely source of your headaches.

Certain muscles at the front of your neck, shoulder, and face may also become tender. By applying pressure to specific areas, we can assess whether a particular spot is triggering a headache.

Once correctly diagnosed, tailored treatment can begin. This may involve spinal adjustments, soft tissue therapy, and exercises to improve posture and reduce muscle tension.

We will recommend the most suitable treatment for you depending on the assessment findings, your condition, and your preferences. Our aim is to address the cause of your headaches and help you find relief from the symptoms.



With chiropractic care, many patients report a reduction in both the intensity and frequency of their cervicogenic headaches.

Supporting studies discussed in our research article in this issue.

PRACTICE UPDATE

ON ARRIVAL AT THE CLINIC

Please see the receptionist upon arrival. This eliminates the possibility of you being overlooked and enables us to have your information ready.

BOOKING ONLINE

We now have an online booking service from our email address: admin@healthlinkchiroandmassage.com.au

APPOINTMENTS

Your appointment schedule is designed specifically to obtain the best possible results. Please be sure to make up any missed appointments. Should you wish to change an appointment, we would appreciate as much notice as possible so that other patients can be offered your time.

PHONE CALLS

Chiropractors in this practice may be contacted by phone during office hours. A message will be taken if the Chiropractor is with another patient and your call will be returned when the Chiropractor is available.

FEEDBACK

We are here to serve you. Please speak to your chiropractor or the staff about any concerns you may have. We see your constructive comments as helping us to help you and others.

WAITING TIMES

Despite our best intentions, we sometimes run late! Be assured that when it comes your turn the chiropractor will not rush to catch up but will give your problem the time it deserves. Thank you for your consideration.

QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 8. Trypophan | 1. Cervicogenic |
| 7. Thoracic | 2. Spine |
| 8. Trypophan | 3. Serotonin |
| Hidden word: | 4. Walnuts |
| | 5. Lumbar |
| Vitality | 6. Sciatica |

Disclaimer:

The information in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional health advice, diagnosis or treatment. Decisions relating to your health should always be made in consultation with your health care provider. Talk to your chiropractor first.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you