

# Spine Alive

## NEWSLETTER

### JULY 2011

**DEFY GRAVITY:** It is quite amazing how many people are aspiring to look like the hunch back of Notre dame. But it is not just the look; it's the effect on the nervous system that is the real worry. The spine is designed to sit and move a certain way and if it doesn't, the nervous system is affected in a negative way. What makes the spine become dysfunctional are either big traumas like accidents or falls and the little accidents, like our day-to-day activities such as poor posture. We can't always avoid the accidents and falls, but we can do something about our posture.



Gravity is an amazing thing that obviously keeps us grounded, but unfortunately, most of the population allows gravity to take control and pull us into hideous positions so that we all walk around looking like turtles or emus, or stand with our pelvis forward as though we are constantly pregnant. This puts so much pressure on the spine and naturally leads to pain.

**So what are we going to do about this...?** STAND, SIT, AND WALK STRAIGHT, DEFY GRAVITY, PLEASE. Try and push the top of your head (at the back) up towards the ceiling. This will elongate the back of your neck, which will pull the head back and tuck the chin in. The shoulders will naturally fall back and the pelvis will come back under the upper body. It's not as simple as that, but, it is a good start. It will take time to correct years of poor posture, but it's not going to go away or improve if you don't put the effort in.

Andrew and I are very passionate about good posture, as we know how important it is. We will do our best to improve your spine, eliminate pain and guide your spine into a better state, but we need your help, and you need your help. Now besides you, if there is anyone you know and care about that you feel has poor posture, with or without pain, then send them to the King and Queen of posture, so that hopefully we can prevent pain for someone else.

#### **KEEPING YOUR APPOINTMENTS**

We know that we mention this each time, but we beg you, please try and remember your appointments and try and turn up on time. We understand that unforeseen circumstances do come up, but if you could please give us as much notice as possible, it will give us the opportunity to offer that appointment to someone else. Besides being respectful to other patients, and the practitioners, it is important to keep to your schedule so that we can get the most optimal results out of your care and not waste all the time and effort you have already put into caring for your

#### **Ever wondered how you can scratch your nose in the dark without poking yourself in the eye?**

How do you know how high to lift your arm? Without seeing your hand how do you know when to stop?

Its not something we think about very often (if at all), but as chiropractors we do, and so should you. But why?

Well, the main reason is that the very same mechanisms that allow you to do things like scratch your nose in the dark are used to control the movement of your spine. Just think about all the actions that have to be coordinated in your back just to stand upright.

You have a long column of bones (the vertebra of your spine) sitting one on top of the other with a soft squishy disc sitting between each one and a large heavy ball (your head) balanced at the top. Its like stacking a bunch of small wooden blocks on top of each other with a marshmallow in between and putting a bowling ball on top. Could you imagine trying to stop that from tipping over? And yet this is exactly what our spines are doing every second of the day.

To complete this amazing balancing act we use an incredible amount of "feedback" from all the joints and muscles of the spine - combined and compared to the info we get from our eyes and ears. Its a marvellous system and we take it for granted.

But spinal problems are often the result of a breakdown in this system. Think about the way in which you or people you know have hurt their back or neck. How many times do you hear them say - I just bent forward to tie my shoes, or, I just went to get out of bed and "bang" my back went!

These type of problems and many others occur when there is a lack of healthy coordination of movement between joints and the muscles that support them. And if your brain doesn't know exactly where the joints are positioned things go wrong. A good example of this type of problem is what happens after you sprain an ankle. Even weeks after the injury your ankle will still feel a bit "weak". You will often stumble or half go over on it again. This is due to the strain of the ankle mucking up the feedback to your brain about what your foot is doing.

The same thing occurs in the joints of your spine and this is where chiropractic care can make such a difference. A chiropractic adjustment not only starts to normalise the movement of a joint but fires up the nervous system and increases the feedback to the brain. This improved communication between the joints of the body improves so many things.

It's not just pain relief, or a decreased chance of reinjury. Its not just a better rate of recovery and the ability to get back to work (or play) faster.

Changing the way your body communicates with itself changes you. It can improve your golf swing, improve your balance, change the way you move, improve your posture and even the way you breathe. Your chiropractic care has far reaching effects - so continue to enjoy the benefits it can bring. Find out how to get the most from your care by coming along to one of our FREE SPINAL CARE CLASSES.



## Women's Health, Acupuncture and Chinese medicine – many solutions for a myriad of problems.

Bloating, migraines, mood swings, painful & heavy periods, digestive upsets, insomnia, weight fluctuations, fatigue, difficulty conceiving, just to name a few— any of these sound familiar? This is not how your monthly menstrual cycle is meant to be! Your body is telling you that it is stressed and that your hormones and lifestyle are out of balance.

**Acupuncture & Chinese medicine** will help you feel healthier and happier by gently relieving those symptoms and addressing the root problem to prevent future imbalances. Each treatment is tailored to suit your unique individual health concerns. It will take approximately 3 months to balance your hormones and enable you to experience sustained results through regular acupuncture, Chinese herbs and following the advice below.

### So what can you do to help your body's natural cleansing cycle along?

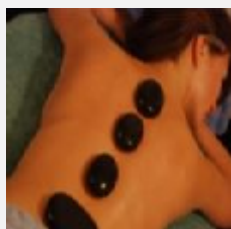
- Eat a balanced, colourful, fresh, nutritious diet with plenty of calcium, vitamins & minerals. Try to avoid foods that are high in sugar, preservatives and added hormones.
- Increase your calcium & magnesium intake 10 days before your period is due.
- Avoid too many raw or cold foods that place extra strain on your digestive system— steam, roast, stir fry—especially in winter months!
- Reduce overall caffeine intake and particularly avoid drinking coffee during your period.
- Don't smoke!
- Restrict or reduce alcohol consumption & avoid deep fried fatty foods.
- Get sufficient rest – take some time out to just be quiet .
- Find a daily exercise that you enjoy – cycling/ walking/running/ swimming/ aerobics/ pilates/yoga. Throw some weights into the mix to maintain muscle tone and support those bones.
- Find constructive ways of dealing with stress whenever possible and try to keep a positive outlook on life – make the most of everyday.



## Touch Through Massage

Touch, like food and water, is essential. One of the marvels of touch is that it benefits people at all stages of life and on every level, physical, emotional and mental. It improves sleep, reduces muscular tension, increases range of motion, promotes circulation and provides a sense of well being and calm. Other benefits include improvements in:

**\*Sleep \*Fatigue \*Anxiety \*Depression**



Just a gentle reminder that I specialize in many styles of massage, including Aromatherapy (tailor made for you!) and hot stone massage, which is a fantastic way to soothe your senses, especially on a cold winters day!

## The Social Scene

Last time I wrote, I had just had a baby, and how the time has flown. We now have a beautiful little girl, Alexandra Mabel who is developing a lovely personality, is very smiley, sitting up well, on to solid food and already has her first two teeth!!! Besides that, her



spine is looking lovely, she gets her regular adjustments, and she has only had a small sniffle and is an absolute delight, even at 3am. What can I say about William; he is approaching 2<sup>1/2</sup>, is into everything, wants to take hammers and tape measures to bed and is quite taken with Bob the

Builder, Thomas the Tank Engine and Elmo. Tantrums are becoming a bit of a regular, but I have been reassured that is quite normal. The house renovations have now gone past the 14 month mark and are close, or so we have been told, but we will believe it when we see it. Outside of the kids, and some renovations, it's just work, work and more work.

*Alison*

I have been working away with the fantastic team at Spine Alive for almost 2 years. At the end of August, I am taking some time off to recharge my batteries and explore parts of France, Ireland, Scotland and Belgium. I am hoping to visit a couple of acupuncture clinics while I am away and investigate whether they incorporate the use of Guinness or Belgian chocolate into any of their acupuncture techniques. I will be back to work on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September.



*Rebecca*

It is great to be here at Spine Alive, after five weeks in Borneo. I volunteered at Samboja Lestari, central Kalimantan, working with an amazing team, rehabilitating and releasing Orangutans and Sunbears. What an amazing experience! I have no doubt it has changed my perspective, and enhanced everything I do. Working hand in hand with the local community, I saw extraordinary examples of humility and courage daily. Borneo is a third world country, but the spirit of the people reminds me how important connections are, to move beyond our comfort zones and to re-connect with each other.



Be Happy.

*Meredith*

As most of my patients know – my wife and I had a baby boy in June this year. Louis Henry Blyth was born at the new hospital in Orange and arrived to the sound of his Father cheering and to the sound of “whoa” from the midwives and doctors. Louis was 5210 g (or 11 pound 7.5 ounces)!!! and 58cm long. I didn't know they made them that big and by the attention he got from all the staff I would say that it doesn't happen very often. Thankfully both Louis and my wife came through healthy and happy, and my daughter Audrey who is almost 2, is in love with her brother already. I want to thank everyone for their congratulations and well wishes (and I will be showing off a photo of Louis in the office soon).



*Andrew*