

Family Chiropractic

*Courtesy of Harbourfront Family Chiropractic
by Dr. Warren Gage*



How well do you adapt to stress? Not all stress is bad. A 20-minute workout for a fit and trim 65-year old is good stress. The same workout for an out-of-shape 35-year old would likely be bad stress! Whether your body considers stress good or bad is largely a function of how well it can accommodate it. Ultimately, this capacity is based on the condition of your nervous system. Stress is part of everyday living. In fact, a stress-free life would be boring! Life is enjoyable when we have ample resources to experience and overcome the stresses we face.

Physical Stress: A whiplash injury from a car accident is an obvious source of physical stress. As is repetitive motions, a slip and fall, lack of sleep or overdoing it in the garden. Early on, learning to walk, ride a bike and the birth process itself are sources of physical stress.

It's not the stress—it's your reaction to it that matters! Accumulated stress exhausts our reserves. Then, something as simple as mowing the lawn can put us over the edge. Chiropractic care helps restore your adaptive capacity.

Emotional Stress: Fear, grief, anger and other emotions affect our entire body. Notice the posture of someone who is sad or depressed. Frustration, or a sense of powerlessness at work, is a common form of emotional stress.

Clearly, it's not the stress, but our response to it that is critical. Chiropractic care, because its focus is to reduce tension to your nervous system, can help you respond more resourcefully.

Chemical Stress: Common sources of chemical stress include poor nutrition, sugar, refined carbohydrates and unhealthy fats.

Pharmaceuticals, preservatives, tobacco, alcohol, recreational drugs, vaccinations, pollen and a host of other substances also affect our nervous system, muscle tone and our spine.

The problem isn't the pollen or chemical, because not everyone reacts. Symptoms can appear when you lose your ability to adapt. Chiropractic care has helped millions reduce or eliminate reactions to many types of chemical stress.

If you lack the reserves to adapt to stress in a healthy way, it takes a toll. If your body reacts by "tripping a circuit breaker," causing vertebral subluxation, chiropractic care is likely to help.

How can stress affect my spine?

Think of your spinal cord as a guitar string, the greater the tension, the higher the note. Your nervous system has "tone" as well. With each stressor, your body tightens up, like bracing yourself for a tight curve on a roller coaster. The weakest joints of your spine are forced out of their normal position. Like the shrill notes from an over-tightened string, your body loses its capacity to respond to the full range of human experience. And ill health can result.

Can chiropractic care solve all my stress?

Of course not but it can certainly help. Much of the emotional stress we experience is largely self-induced. Imagine how much pain and suffering result from attaching inappropriate meanings to events in our lives. Or the constant burden we experience by not forgiving others. Stress is a natural part of life. Chiropractic care can't eliminate stress, but it can help increase your capacity to accommodate it.