

To the Editor

As usual, you make a great point regarding the issue of perspective and chiropractic's relative place in the risk of receiving health care¹ in your review of the article by Cohn² entitled, *A Review of the Literature Regarding Stroke and Chiropractic*. Having returned from the RAC in Kansas where I saw you and many others it became clear from a lecture³ by Dr. Rosner of FCER that chiropractic's place in the realm of risk is bizarrely low.

Ironically if my memory serves me he presented information at the Sacro Occipital Technique Organization - USA Clinical Symposium⁴ that related chiropractic care causing death on par with a lightning strike, and less common than events that can take place in a common household. In some studies, it even seemed that walking around and living your life was more fraught with danger than receiving chiropractic care. Much of this seems to be based on how we look at the statistics.

When any reasonable mind looks at the statistics what remains clear is that chiropractic is as relatively safe a procedure as any around. On the other hand, what also becomes clear is that there is significant risk in most medical procedures from medicating to surgery. It would seem obvious, that any conservative alternative would be explored prior to interventions that have risk, such as those associated with medicating or surgery. When it comes to conservative care with low risk I can't help but think of chiropractic care.

It would seem that to focus on the detrimental effects of chiropractic care in the extreme could only function if one or both of the following premises are taken:

1. Chiropractic is unscientific, unproved, on the level of a "placebo," and essentially of no value for patient care. Therefore, any negative side effects are profoundly important to report and emphasize, since the benefits are only negligible at best.

2. There is a financial interest or profound ignorance, which would allow the modulating of data to suit a particular mind set that seeks to paint chiropractic as an unsafe form of health care.

As I review number one and two I have a difficult time advocating either position. I have found that medical professionals with whom I have spoken on this topic seem mostly sincere and generally misinformed. However, from a review of a recent article authored by Morely, Rosner, and Redwood,⁵ it became clear that there are motivated individuals in high positions of research authority who have a "vendetta" against chiropractic.

As hard as I try to be fair minded, even to the extreme, a casual reading of the above article illustrates that there was purposeful intent to impugn chiropractic and chiropractors. Sadly, it was also clear that the peer review process and high stature of some journals are not immune to misrepresentation, misquoting, and misstating, all to support a premise that chiropractic is unfounded or unsafe.

Education of the public and professionals is the only venue I see at this moment. The real issue is that the public doesn't

really know, trusts authority, and hopes that those in the health care field focus on their health and not their pocket book.

Sincerely,

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2. Cohn A, A Review of the Literature Regarding Stroke and Chiropractic Journal of Vertebral Subluxation Research Sep 2001; 4 (3) Ari Cohn,
3. Rosner AL, Growth of Pinocchio's Nose: Ernst's Rebuttal * (Lecture Presentation) Research Agenda Conference VI, Kansas City, Missouri, July 2001 [* Ernst E. reply to paper by Morley, Rosner, Redwood Journal of Alternative and Complimentary Medicine, 2001; 7(1): 79-82].
4. Rosner AL, Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Cost and Safety Issues Sacro Occipital Technique Organization - USA Clinical Symposium, Chicago, Illinois, Aug 16-19, 2001.
5. Morely J, Rosner AL, Redwood D, A Case Study of Misrepresentation of the Scientific Literature: Recent Reviews of Chiropractic, Journal of Alternative and Complimentary Medicine, 2001; 7(1): 65-78.