

Rehabilitation

And The Chiropractic Practice

by Vicki Nuber



If you are looking for a way to get your patients excited and inspired, help them improve their outcomes and ultimately empower them to lead a healthier life, then consider expanding your focus on rehabilitation. Over the past decade, rehab has become an active and integral part of an increasingly-larger number of chiropractic practices, and not just of those which focus on sports or for techniques that emphasize muscle re-education.

Integrating rehabilitation into an existing chiropractic practice or including rehab as part of a new practice can take many forms. The varying approaches and the equipment available range from simple and inexpensive to full-scale, comprehensive rehabilitation facilities. The choice is only limited by your vision for your practice. Better yet, the commitment to rehab doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg. You can begin simply and build slowly by adding the more advanced equipment as your practice budget allows.

Focus On Functionally Re-Educating Muscles

Several decades ago rehab was widely considered as being outside of the chiropractic mainstream...almost a separate business. Practices often had free weights, weight machines, resistance machines, and other equipment and gear intended to help patients in the process of muscular re-education. Rehab generally followed the lead of exercise experts who focused on strengthening muscles in isolation, not to mention that there was also more emphasis on passive treatment of injuries, e.g. through electrotherapy and other devices, as the primary rehabilitation approach.

Nowadays the focus is on re-educating muscles in a functional way. This new emphasis on functionality has changed the way chiropractors approach rehab and made it much easier to add rehabilitation to their practices. A functional rehab approach can start with a few

boxes of resistance bands, exercise balls, and training mats. Teaching floor exercises that work challenged muscles in concert with other muscle groups increases application, and in many cases the functional care allows progression to active re-education as soon as your patients can do so within their pain tolerance.

This shift in how chiropractors view rehabilitation has changed the scope of the rehab practice. Practitioners can now begin with a relatively small investment in equipment in order to test the waters, which means that seeing a return on investment for active re-education can happen much more quickly than before. Then, as your rehab practice grows, you can begin adding equipment that will facilitate seeing more patients and providing even more comprehensive care.

Attract Those Active, Health Conscious Patients Who Wholeheartedly Embrace Chiropractic Care

There's no doubt that active, health conscious people often appreciate the value of chiropractic care more than others. These patients are very gratifying to serve because they take responsibility for their own care. Yet, they can also be demanding patients, constantly seeking new and better ways to achieve optimal well-being and fitness. It is easy to see that having no perceived knowledge in fitness or exercise health is not an effective way to build a practice with this group, but many doctors have built highly successful practices by providing the services and having the equipment available that attracts this type of target audience. In many cases the equipment is so easy to install and use that it's pretty much like adding an extra profit center without having to add additional staff.

The combination of rehabilitation with the chiropractic adjustment is often a great way to engage these active, health conscious chiropractic patients. Weekend war-

riors, amateur athletes, and yoga moms well understand that there is a relationship between strength and mobility. If you can offer a value-added service to their schedule of chiropractic adjustments that helps them rebound more easily and more quickly from their activities, they may see even more value in keeping their bodies maintained under your care and direction. Plus, they'll refer other like-minded individuals to you.

Offer An Effective Adjunct To Mainstream Treatment

There is another compelling reason for chiropractors to consider expanding into a rehab practice: the remarkable power of combining the chiropractic adjustment with prescriptive strength and conditioning. Currently, mostly doctors of chiropractic working alone or in conjunction with a multidisciplinary team offer this particular combination of services. However, for many patients, it can be a powerful combination that helps them escape pain and improve mobility with lasting effects. The science for this effectiveness is the same science that supports the reasons for the chiropractic adjustment, i.e. poor intersegmental mechanics in the spine lead to fixation and a change in muscle firing patterns. Often muscle groups respond to adjustments immediately, but their lasting change may require re-education, especially in problem cases where muscles have been "stuck" for quite some time and are involved in everyday functions like walking and climbing stairs.

If you think assessing and creating a re-education program is something that's out of your league, then pause to reconsider. With a few minutes of key assessments you can identify areas of improper muscle firing patterns and confidently start educating your patients on how to correct them. And since the chiropractic profession boasts a large network of rehabilitation experts and rehab continuing education courses you can jump in and get your feet wet almost immediately.

Improve The Quality Of Your Patient Care, Attract New Patients, And Increase Revenue

If you haven't looked into rehabilitation as a part of your practice, it's time to learn more about how the rehab world has changed and how incorporating it in your practice can improve both the quality of your patient care and also your bottom line. With a focus on active and functional exercises, you can test the waters of rehabilitation, and then little by little add the equipment that best fits your practice needs. Your expansion into rehabilitation and fitness can help attract an active, health conscious patient base that appreciates your combination of the adjustment with muscular re-education, one which you may have previously found challenging to reach. It's easier than you may think to test the waters and begin showing your patients the benefits, especially with the current plethora of equipment available from vendors as well as a wide variety of educational opportunities from a host of chiropractic experts."

About The Author: Vicki Nuber is the editor-in-chief of Chiropractic Products.

All Support Belts Are Not Created Equal!



We have three patents to back you up!

Contour Support Belt

- PATENTED hip and rib contour for extra comfort
- PATENTED one way velcro closure for exact fit
- PATENTED downward angle design
- Wide in front for extra abdominal support
- 2 year warranty
- Custom sizes available
- Suspenders and BIOFLEX® magnet available on any model

Made in USA!



Covered under US Patents
No. 5,046,488, 5,053,883 and 5,316,022

Model 4006
with lumbo/sacral pad

\$69.95

Sacroiliac Belt

- Non-slip webbing interior
- 3" Woven cotton shell
- Dual closure tension straps

Made in USA!



\$39.95

Elastic Back Support Belt



- Hip and rib contour for extra comfort
- Detachable suspenders
- Dual closure tension straps
- Sizes XS - XXL

\$29.95

Made in USA!



Get more referrals
with our
Custom Logo Program



1-800-772-4435

(920) 426-2676

Fax: (920) 426-2691

E-Mail: info@schiek.com

Website: www.schiek.com