



# MULTIFACETED CHIROPRACTIC

## Integrative Approaches Enhance Healing

by Marlaina Donato

**M**odern chiropractors are often seen primarily as pain specialists, yet their care can encompass much more. While the common focus is better health through spinal manipulation, the origins of chiropractic are manifold. Typical approaches for structural issues and injuries include spinal adjustments, therapeutic ultrasound and heat therapy, but some practitioners also embrace nutrition.

Training requirements for chiropractors vary by state. “Here in Oregon, chiropractic physicians—both legally and through our training—are taught to be primary care physicians,” says Doctor of Chiropractic Michael Herb, of the Absolute Wellness Center, in Eugene, Oregon. “We must complete extensive training not only on the musculoskeletal system, but also on managing various internal medical pathologies such as those related to the cardiovascular system, genitourinary conditions,

obstetrics and gynecology. We also learn to perform minor surgical procedures.”

Chiropractor Tom Hyland Robertson, of Whole Chiropractic Healthcare, in Odenton, Maryland, notes, “To limit chiropractic to two categories of traditional and integrative isn’t accurate. There are almost as many specialists among doctors of chiropractic (DC) as among medical doctors (M.D.). There are chiropractors that specialize in pediatrics, veterinary, orthopedics, internal medicine, neurology, radiology and other areas. Integrative chiropractic uses as many tools as possible from the realm of each doctor’s training.”

### **Integrative Well-Being**

The world of chiropractic is diverse and growing to meet patient needs. Many chiropractors offer several healing modalities in-house that are geared to take whole-person care to an integrated harmonious level.

“Research shows that patient outcomes are far better with a multidisciplinary approach to healthcare needs,” says Herb. “Offering a variety of specialties like physical therapy, sports medicine, nutrition and natural pain relief in my practice means patients receive the care and amount of time they need. They are not limited by what I personally can offer or have time to provide.”

Many chiropractic facilities nationwide employ acupuncturists and therapeutic massage therapists, offering diverse treatment options like functional medicine and cryotherapy—ice therapy—versus traditional heat therapy.

Robertson provides complementary treatments ranging from nutrition to physical therapy and yoga because he has found it is important to incorporate multiple treatment philosophies, examining the same problem from different angles, saying, “Chiropractic integrates many safe modalities found to be more effective than opioids, for instance.” He notes that early chiropractic was actually integrative, with its founder, Donald David Palmer, promoting a healthy diet and calmer lifestyle a century ago.

## Collaborative Options

Progressive chiropractic now includes innovative approaches to treat the nervous system. The cutting-edge field of functional (or chiropractic) neurology, which reactivates partially non-functional neural pathways, is employed in cases like concussions, vertigo, migraines, pain syndromes, neuropathy and attention-deficit disorders.

Massage modalities, combined with chiropractic, are widely recognized to significantly increase circulation and improve range of motion. Acupuncture, when used in conjunction with chiropractic treatment, enhances muscle relaxation and fosters easier adjustments.

Chiropractor Kody R. Johnson, of the Johnson Chiropractic and Holistic Health Center, in Columbia, Missouri, is board certified in acupuncture and employs dry needling to target trigger points in tight muscles. He also specializes in functional medicine. Hormone balance, nutritional inadequacies, the presence of heavy metals and genetic markers for disease are all considered in determining a patient’s overall health.

“Chiropractic treatment addresses results of physical stress. Functional medicine looks at emotional and biochemical stress,” says Johnson. “The chiropractic paradigm is based on the premise that the body has an inborn ability to heal itself. If the only method a provider has to offer is chiropractic adjustments, then they’ll have cases where the patient’s condition doesn’t fully improve because there might be other factors at play, including nutritional deficiencies, toxicities and emotional stress. When we address other relevant issues, we find that patients ‘hold’ their adjustments longer.”

*Marlaina Donato is a freelance writer, multimedia artist and author of books in the spirituality and alternative health genres. She lives in Hawley, PA. Connect at [MarlainaDonato.com](http://MarlainaDonato.com).*