SUBLUXATION

I’m about to do an exam but before I do it I want to make sure you understand what it is I’m looking for. Does that make sense?

Yes.

One of the functions your body has is to heal itself. Does that make sense?

I Guess.

Well, if you cut yourself what happens?

I bleed.

True, but do you keep bleeding?

No, it scabs over.

Right. You have those scabs the rest of your life?

No, it heals.

Exactly. But when it comes to your headaches your body isn’t healing is it?

They go away.

Yes, but you keep getting them. Most people get one or two a year and that’s it. Their body heals whatever is causing them. But your body isn’t doing that you keep getting them. Do you see that?

Yes, I guess so.

So something must be interfering with your body’s ability to heal these. Does that make sense?

I’ve never looked at it that way.
I Understand. The principle interference we find, and the one we treat in Chiropractic, is a condition called the subluxation. Did you read that pamphlet?

Yes.

OK. This is so important that I want to spend a little time to make sure you understand it. Is that all right?

Yes.

Great. Read this first definition to me.

A *subluxation* is a minor misalignment of a segment of the spine (vertebra) causing an irritation to the spine with a loss of normal function.

That’s quite a mouthful. Do you understand it?

*I think so. (Hesitant)*

Well, let me take it apart for you. What we are talking about is “a segment of the spine (vertebra)” (Take up the pinched nerve.) These are two vertebra. They are from this region of the back. (touch Lumbar area on the patient.) Have you ever seen anything like this?

No.

Have you ever seen someone bend over and noticed the bumps down the middle of their back? (Touch the spinus processes in the patient's cervical area.) These?

Yes.

That’s the tips of these here. (Point out the spinus processes on the model.) So these are at the back of your body and your stomach or throat are out here like this. (Make an oval out of your fingers around the pinched nerve showing it to be at the back of the oval.) Do you see that?
Yes.

Good. Do you see how they are lined up?

Yes.

That’s the way it’s supposed to be. But what does it say happens here? (Point to the definition.)

*It gets misaligned.*

That’s right. It looks like this. (Subluxate the Pinched Nerve.) It doesn’t look like much does it?

*No.*

True. It isn’t. But, I don't want you to get the idea that it is not important. The problem with that is it causes what? (Point to the definition.)

*Irritation to a nerve.*

Right. You see you have a whole stack of these vertebrae and at the top of them is your skull. (Panomine with your hands.) In that skull is your brain. Now your brain runs everything. Does that make sense to you?

*Yes.*

Right. Every function in your body is run from the brain. It's the master computer for the whole body. Are you with me on this?

*Yea sure.*

OK. The way it communicates all these programs and commands to where they need to go is through something called the spinal cord. Are you familiar with this?

*Yes.*
That’s good. That is located right here. (Point to it in the pinched nerve model.) As you can see it is completely encased in bone. (Show it.) Do you see that?

Yes.

All right. The only place that nerves can branch off of the spinal cord is here. (Point.) Do you see how the two vertebrae form an opening?

Yes.

Right. And you can see the beginning of one here at the top and another here at the bottom. Do you see that?

Yes.

OK. This is the only place that a nerve can branch from the spinal cord. These nerves branch and branch and branch and eventually go to every cell in the body. Do you follow that?

Yes.

Good. Now when this vertebra gets out of alignment do you see how it changes the shape of that hole?

Yes.

Doesn’t look like much does it?

No, it doesn’t.

True here let me show you. Let me have your little finger. (Take it.) Let’s say this finger is the nerve that is right here. (Use the side of the Pinched Nerve that doesn’t have the hot disk. Subluxate the vertebra towards that side to open it up more. Shove the little finger into the opening making sure the meaty part of the finger faces the body of the vertebra and lines up with the edge of the vertebra.) When there is a subluxation this is what happens.
(Gently subluxate the vertebra away from the finger. Watch for the flinch or when you feel you are getting enough resistance.) Is that irritating?

Yes.

Right. (Take the finger out, but hang on to it.) The problem with that irritation is it causes what? (Point to the definition.)

*A loss of normal function.*

Right, let me show you. (Point to the patients arm.) Let’s say this is your spinal cord going up to your brain, (Point on up the arm towards the patient’s head.) and your fingers are the nerves branching off of your spinal cord. Are you with me?

Yes.

Great. (Pick up a rubber band. Hold one end with the hand still holding the finger. Stretch it slightly and wrap it once around the base of the finger and hold on to the louse end with the first end.) This is the subluxation on that nerve. Now how well will that nerve work?

*Not Good.*

True. The thing with nerves is that they go places. There is something out here at the end of this nerve. (Panomine some object a couple of feet out beyond the end of the finger.) If this nerve isn’t working right how well would you expect that to work?

*Not good.*

That’s right. Let me give you an example of that. Have you ever woken up in the morning and found your arm asleep?

Yes.

Right. What causes that?
I slept on it wrong.

True, but what about sleeping on it causes it to go asleep.

I cut off the circulation in it.

Well, I’ve cut off the circulation in your finger and we are getting some great colors here. Do You see this?

Yes.

Right. Well, if your arm was asleep because of the circulation being cut off wouldn't you expect your arm to be pale or red or puffy and such like your finger here?

Yes.

Do you see anything like that when your arm is asleep?

I never noticed.

Do you think you would have missed it?

I guess not.

Right. But, you can’t feel your fingers right?

Yes.

And if you wanted to pick something up could you control your fingers well enough to do it?

I guess not.

Right. Well, what system communicates feelings from the fingers to the brain and commands from the brain to control the fingers?

Nerves?
That’s right. So, when you have an arm that is asleep you are looking at nerve interference causing a loss of normal function of your arm. Does that make sense to you?

Yes.

Good. Now instead of an arm let’s say you have an organ out here at the end of this nerve. (Panomine something a couple feet beyond the finger.) Like your stomach. Just like that arm didn’t function right would you expect your stomach to work right?

_I guess not._

That’s right. What sort of troubles would you expect your stomach to give you if it’s not working right?

_Indigestion, heartburn, ulcers._

Yes. And what do you normally do for heart burn and such?

_Tumms._

That’s right. That makes it feel better, but if this is caused by this subluxation on the nerve here will that or any other medication do anything to get the bone off the nerve?

_No._

That’s right. If this is what is going on what do you think will happen the next time you eat?

_Heart burn again?_

That’s right. I’ll bet you even know people who live on Tumms or Rolaids or Malox and such. Don’t you?

_Yes that's true._
You bet. If this subluxation was the real cause of their problem what would we have to do if we wanted to really handle it.

_Get that rubber band off my finger._

We call that “adjusting the subluxation.” (Take the rubber band off) Then the stomach immediately feels better doesn’t it.

<Yes.>

Right. Now when I examine you, (pick up the pinched nerve and use it during this) I am looking to find out if you have a misalignment of a segment of the spine causing an irritation to a nerve with a loss of normal function. (Pointing to or touching the finger you just abused as you say “loss of normal function”) In this case causing your head aches or keeping your body from healing them. Does that make sense to you?

Yes.

OK. Would you agree that if we find you have them that you are in the right place to finally handle the cause of your head aches and not just the symptoms the way you have been doing?

Yes.

Actually, you’d better hope that we find them, because if we do I can help you and if I don’t I can’t. Now, the nice thing about my exam is that you will be finding out if you have subluxations as soon as I do.

(If things have gone well and quickly you will probably want to go ahead and go through the rest of the pamphlet, but you have covered the most important part of it.)