

# OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Alan Cranton, DC, ND

## Chiropractic Adjustments May Boost Lung Function

*Chiropractic adjustments may improve lung function, according to researchers. Dr. Cranton is excited by this research, because it adds to mounting research emphasizing the intimate connection between spinal health and overall well-being.*

### Chiropractic Adjustments Improve Respiratory Function

Regular chiropractic care may improve pulmonary function, say scientists.

One cutting-edge study followed 20 healthy, non-smoking individuals 18 to 28 years of age.

Researchers divided the participants into four groups: 1) exercise only, 2) chiropractic care only, 3) chiropractic care followed by exercise and 4) no treatment (control). Each participant underwent six sessions of interventions over a four-week period (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2007;29:509-513).

Researchers examined the patients who received chiropractic care for the presence of a spinal condition known

as *vertebral subluxation*, characterized by areas in the spine where movement is restricted or bones (vertebrae) are slightly out of alignment. When chiropractors, such as Dr. Cranton, detect these vertebral subluxations, they restore motion and alignment to the spine using specialized maneuvers called *chiropractic adjustments*. The study volunteers in the chiropractic groups received chiropractic adjustments as the main focus of their treatment.

Before and after the intervention, the investigators used standard pulmonary function tests to assess measures of lung capacity. Specifically, they looked at two measurements called forced vital capacity and forced expiratory volume in the first second.

Forced vital capacity (FVC) measures the maximum amount of air exhaled

after taking a deep breath. Forced expiratory volume in the first second (FEV<sub>1</sub>) measures the amount of air that can be exhaled in one second.

Results revealed that the exercise-only group showed a significant drop in FVC and FEV<sub>1</sub>. The chiropractic-only group showed a significant boost in FVC and FEV<sub>1</sub>. The dual-therapy group also showed a significant boost in FVC and FEV<sub>1</sub> immediately following chiropractic care, then an additional increase following exercise.

The study's authors conclude that chiropractic care "appears to increase the respiratory function of normal individuals." The authors also discuss "the potential for this intervention administered before exercise to permit additional tolerance within the respiratory system that could allow an extended exercise program."

### Problems With Asthma Drugs

Dr. Cranton recommends drug-free asthma prevention strategies for three reasons:

- ✓ Focusing on prevention, rather than covering up symptoms with drugs, is fundamental to the chiropractic philosophy of wellness.
- ✓ Asthma medications may have hazardous side effects.
- ✓ All-natural prevention strategies are often more effective than asthma medications.

Although allergy shots remain a popular line of attack against asthma, a 10-year Johns Hopkins' study of 121 children — ages 5 to 14 years with allergies and asthma — reveals that these shots offer little protection.



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## The All-Natural Chiropractic Strategy for Boosting Lung Function

**Keep regular chiropractic care appointments.** As the research outlined in this *Optimal Health University™* handout illustrates, receiving regular chiropractic adjustments may have a profound impact on lung function.

**Eat a nutrient-rich diet.** Children with diets low in vegetables and vitamin E are almost three times as likely to suffer asthma symptoms, compared with their counterparts who eat more healthful diets (*Thorax* 2000;55:775-9). And, according to a study of nearly 1,000 children, between the ages of 3 and 5 years, a diet high in polyunsaturated fats from margarines, fried foods and vegetable oils doubles a child's risk of respiratory disease. Investigators concluded that a diet high in polyunsaturated fats accounted for 17 percent of the asthma cases studied (*Thorax* 2001;56:589-95).

**Engage in daily aerobic exercise.** A wealth of research indicates that engaging in daily aerobic exercise boosts lung function and wards off respiratory disease. (Remember to schedule a complete chiropractic sports-injury prevention checkup before initiating any new exercise routine.)

**Use all-natural cleaning products and skip air fresheners.** Using synthetic chemical household cleaning sprays and air fresheners as little as once per week can raise the risk of developing asthma in adults, according to a study including more than 3,500 subjects across 22 centers in 10 European countries. "Frequent use of household cleaning sprays may be an important risk factor for adult asthma," wrote lead author Jan-Paul Zock, Ph.D. (*Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2007;176:735-41).

**Seek out social support.** Lack of family support and problems in one's neighborhood are associated with greater asthma symptoms in children and adolescents, according to researchers in Vancouver, Canada (*Am J Respir Crit Care Med* 2007;Epub).

**Expose children to pets and farm animals during their first years of life.** According to Marshall Plaut, M.D., chief of the allergic mechanisms section at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, "the striking finding here is that high pet exposure early in life appears to protect against not only pet allergy but also other types of common allergies, such as allergy to dust mites, ragweed, and grass."

**Try cloth diapers.** Studies in mice show that repeated exposure to disposable diapers significantly increases the risk of asthma-associated breathing problems. "The results demonstrate that some types of disposable diapers emit mixtures of chemicals that are toxic to the respiratory tract. Disposable diapers should be considered as one of the factors that might cause or exacerbate asthmatic conditions." (*Arch Environ Health* 1999;54:353-8.)

**Breastfeed.** Children not breastfed are 27 percent more likely to have asthma by age 6; 44 percent more likely to experience "wheeze" three or more times (from age 1); 41 percent more likely to have wheezed in the last 12 months; and 74 percent more likely to have sleep disturbance due to wheeze within the last 12 months.

"Allergy shots are probably not useful for these patients," explains study author Franklin Adkinson, M.D.

### Chiropractic Care for Asthma

Can chiropractic care alleviate asthma? Yes, say researchers who evaluated 36 youngsters with asthma, ages 6 to 17 years. The subjects had 23 chiropractic visits over a 12-week period (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2001;24:369-77).

As part of the 12-week study, one group received chiropractic adjustments, while a control group received placebo treatments.

Patients receiving chiropractic adjustments reported a 20 percent less frequent use of their bronchodilator. They also noted that their quality of life improved by 10 percent to 28 percent. In addition, asthma severity ratings dropped 39 percent. These results remained constant during the one-year follow-up.

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