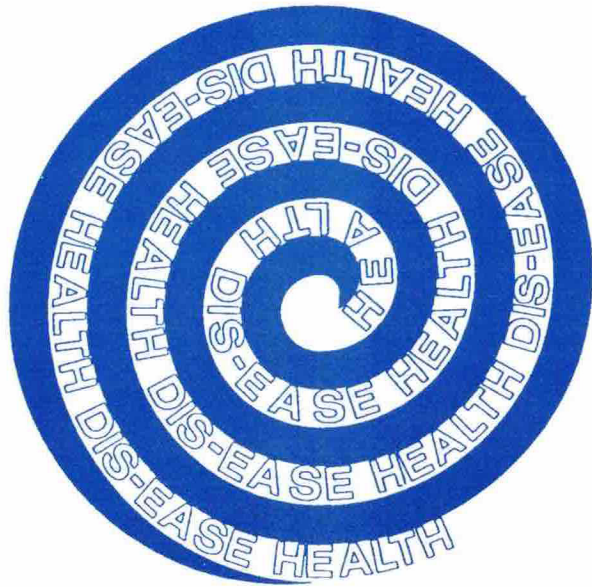


RETRACING



A common question which you and your Chiropractor will have to face is the question of retracing. Many patients cannot understand why they should have to go back, step-by-step, over the various stages of their disease through which they have progressed, in order to regain health. It is because of this fact that this pamphlet on the subject has been produced. Your Chiropractor knows when you are retracing, and if you will take a few minutes to read the explanation given, you will understand your case, as in every other.

What do we mean by retracing? Primarily, it implies going over ground which has already been covered, eventually reaching the point from where you started. When you are under Chiropractic care you may often exhibit symptoms which have not manifested themselves for months, or even years. Your first impression may be that you are becoming worse; when in fact you are retracing several stages through which your dis-ease has progressed. This is not peculiar to only certain cases, but is a common condition to which all are subject. The Dis-ease must be retraced, step by step, in order to reach the point from where it started, namely, health.

Time Element

The question of time is an essential one in the matter of retracing. If a dis-ease has been in progress for a number of years, you should not always expect to regain a normal state within a few days. As it took time for your condition to change from health to a maximum degree of abnormality, so it takes time to retrace from the abnormal condition back to health.

Again, one of the spinal segments may have assumed an abnormal position very suddenly, thus producing impingements on the tiny nerve fibers which supply the cells of the segment itself. As a result, inflammation occurs and with the excessive heat that appears at this time, there is more or less of a melting and fusion of the displaced segment with the other bones it is in contact with. This all may occur in a very few days, and it will take several months of Chiropractic care to remove such a condition.

The foregoing is given merely to show that the time consumed in recovery does not always correspond to the time consumed in the production of the dis-ease. As a general rule, however, it may be stated that acute diseases respond rapidly, while chronic cases of long standing are slower in their response.

Extent of Involvement

Some abnormalities show a very extensive involvement of tissue, while others show very little involvement of tissue. In some dis-eases scientists have never determined what tissues are involved or in what way they are altered. Logically, however, it must be true that if you are suffering from a dis-ease, there must be an abnormality in the function of the tissue.

Assuming that there is involvement of tissue and that the structure is abnormal it must retrace the various steps through which it passed in assuming its abnormal condition. This is well shown by various skin eruptions. The tissue gradually changes and becomes abnormal, reaches its greatest degree of abnormality, and then returns through the steps which it has covered in its appearance until the skin again becomes normal. This is equally true of those tissues in the body which are not visible.

How Dis-ease is Produced

In order for a tissue cell to be healthy, it must be supplied with three essentials. It must receive oxygen in proper quantities; it must receive vital energy in proper quantity and quality through the nervous system. The supply of oxygen is controlled by the vital energy through the nervous system. In the final analysis, then, all three essentials are directly dependent upon receiving the proper amounts and kinds of vital energy. This, then, is the essential. This is the keystone in the arch which all other activities are dependent.

The expression of this vital energy in the tissue cells depends upon the condition of the nervous system, because that is the medium through which the vital force is transmitted from the brain to all parts of the body.

If an abnormal condition is present, then it is because there is some interference with the free transmission of the vital energy from the brain to the tissue cells. There is only one place where this interference can be produced. That place is in the spine where the nerve trunks pass through. If a vertebral subluxation occurs, it results in the partial closing of the opening through which the nerve passes. This naturally produces interferences upon fibers contained in that nerve trunk, so that the vital energy cannot be transmitted in the normal proportion.

Every fiber which is impinged by this constriction supplies some tissue cell, and that tissue cell is abnormal to the degree to which the fiber is impinged.

If many of these fibers are involved, then many cells are involved and they remain in a dis-eased condition until such times as they can again receive their normal quota of vital energy. This can only be accomplished when the interference upon them is removed.

Production of Subluxation

This is a term applied to that condition where the bony segments of the spine become slightly displaced from their normal positions.

How is this subluxation produced? In two ways. It may be produced by a sudden wrenching or twisting of the body and retain the position which it assumes at this time for months or years, unless it meets with some concussion which returns it to the normal position. If this subluxation retains only that degree of abnormality which it originally assumed, and if it was severe enough to produce immediate symptoms, it may be designated as acute. The other form of subluxation is that wherein the vertebra gradually alters its position, becoming more and more abnormal as time progresses and producing an increased interference which is manifested by a continually increasing abnormality in the tissue cells.

The question naturally arises as to how a subluxation may occur more or less gradually. The reason is this: In the first place, a very slight subluxation is produced by the twisting, turning or wrenching to which the spine is continually subject. If this slight subluxation produces an impingement upon those nerve fibers supplying the muscles or ligaments having a direct effect upon the vertebrae in question, they gradually lose their tonicity, or their tone increases.

If either of these conditions occur, the muscles or ligaments on one side of the vertebrae possess less tone than on the other side. They are weak and, as a consequence, the stronger structures tend to pull the vertebra toward their side. This is not a process which is accomplished rapidly. It is the result of weeks, months or even years of progress and accounts for the gradual development of many chronic dis-eases.

Get the idea that the vertebrae are continually becoming more abnormal, and as they are doing so, greater and greater interference upon the nerve fibers is being produced.

It being true that the dis-eased tissues are the result of impingement upon nerve fibers, then it is equally true that the dis-ease will become more and more severe as the impingement becomes more and more pronounced. It must also be remembered that the vertebra, as it changes position, is accommodating itself to the structures which surround it.

Reduction of Subluxation

The Chiropractor is a person who is thoroughly trained to detect the abnormal positions of the vertebrae in the spine. He is further trained in the technique of restoring these vertebrae to their normal positions.

The question naturally arises in your mind as to why the Chiropractor cannot return the vertebra immediately to its normal position and thus immediately restore the tissue to a healthy state. We have shown how a subluxation is produced. We have explained that it is a result of a series of changes extending perhaps over a long period of time. We have shown how the vertebra and the surrounding tissue accommodate themselves to the abnormal positions.

What actually happens when an adjustment is given is that the vertebra is returned toward its normal position. When this is done the ligaments and muscles are given an opportunity to regain, in part, their normal tone, and this permits them to hold the vertebra in a more nearly normal state. The spine, however, and the body in general, is subject to various degrees of strain during everyday life and it is possible that the vertebra may recede toward its old abnormal position, thereby necessitating another adjustment.

It should not be lost sight of, however, that often tissues must be rebuilt in order for the vertebra to hold its normal position. Neither should it be lost sight of that the tissues which, perhaps for years, have assumed an abnormal condition due to the gradually increasing pressure upon the nerve fibers, must be allowed time to return through the various stages they have passed in the production of the abnormality. This all takes time, and patience becomes a cardinal virtue, based on the knowledge that all is progressing as it should.

Results of Retracing

It can thus readily be seen that there is a gradual retracing in the position of the vertebra from the time when it attains that maximum degree, to the time when it returns again to normal. There is also a retracing in the condition of those tissues which are supplied by the nerve fiber impinged. They have gradually attained a maximum degree of abnormality and must return through those various stages by which they progressed in the attainment of that abnormality.

Not only is there a retracing so far as the vertebra are concerned, and the tissue cells affected by the subluxation, but there is also a retracing in the symptoms exhibited by you, the patient.

Different stages of the dis-ease give rise to different symptoms, and as the order reverses itself, symptoms which were present, perhaps years ago, may again occur. If the vertebra is being returned rapidly toward its normal position an entire series of symptoms may develop at one time and you may consequently believe that you are getting worse. As a matter of fact, the outlook is particularly bright at this time. Naturally, if you did not understand the condition, you would assume that you are becoming worse.

It cannot be stressed enough that this is the very time when you should continue Chiropractic care, because the results are being obtained which will do the greatest good, eventually.

It is immaterial whether the dis-ease is one of long standing or an acute condition; there must be a retracing in the position of the vertebra and in whatever structural or functional change that has occurred. Naturally, if this is true, there must be a retracing in the symptoms, but in acute cases, they may be so slight in degree that they pass unnoticed.

Finally, permit us to impress deeply upon you, the Chiropractic patient the necessity for continuing Chiropractic care even though you cannot note the progress made from day to day, or even though you believe your condition to be worse. Remember, that it is essential for this period of retracing to be passed through, and not to allow any temporary discouragement to preclude the ultimate health which will be yours if you continue.



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