

Please... take your hand off the burning stove!

By Dr. Robert Mirandola

The Latin meaning for “doctor” is “teacher” and accordingly, I seek to draw forth the truth or the reality from my patients on each visit to my clinic. My patients expect some type of metaphor, story, or medical research that makes them ponder their state of health and what they should expect from their actions.

Let me ask you a question, if you put your hand on a stove and took a pill or an injection to dull or mask the pain (but didn't take your hand off the burning stove) would your problem be resolved? The answer of course... is no. Let me explain. Your problem is not the pain but the fact that your hand is being scolded. Now, that is obvious. Right? Why is it, then, that when someone has a symptom of neck pain, back pain, sciatica, or carpal tunnel syndrome, the problem is said to be the pain and not some underlying cause of the pain? We take muscle relaxers, cortisone injections, pain relievers, etc. to ease the pain but the pain is your body screaming for help saying something is wrong – internally – now fix it! Don't cover it up. It's the simple idea of cause and effect – if I chase around an effect my whole life and not address the cause, will the effect ever be resolved? Again, the answer is no and you will spend a lot of time and money doing so. The cause is nerve interference or irritation and the effect is what you are experiencing as pain. Now, what if I told you that pain and sensation is only a small percentage of the function of that nerve, and that organ function is the primary function of your nervous system. This is where it really gets interesting, but as a new columnist I promise to hit on this concept in later articles.

For now, let us talk about common issues that I see on a daily basis, these being neck pain, mid back pain, low back pain. This nervous irritation affects us threefold. *Physically*, we are limited in our capabilities to work, exercise, drive, sleep, walk, sit, etc. *Mentally*, it affects our mood, our ability to sleep, or concentrate. *Socially*, let's face it, we are not the most pleasant people to be around when we are irritable or in pain, so it affects our relationships with spouses, children, family, and friends. I know many of you can identify with this personally. So, we already know that drugs and surgery are a great way to keep you pain free while your hand is being scolded, but let us look at other options.

So, how do we turn off the stove?

First and foremost: **light, specific chiropractic adjustments** not only will leave you pain free, but a healthier individual as well. Why do I say you will be healthier? The past chief of cancer prevention at New York's Preventative Medicine Institute, Ronald Pero Ph.D., states that specific chiropractic adjustments increase an individual's immune function by over 200%. How? Remember what was said about the primary function of the nervous system: to control the function and health of your internal organs, including those that control your immunity.

Only use Ice: I tell my patients, in almost all circumstances, to avoid using heat to “relieve” these types of pain and *only use ice*. Why? Heat increases blood flow to an area, which relaxes muscle spasm giving immediate relief but the problem is not muscle spasm but nerve irritation – *two totally different things*. What heat also does is increase the inflammatory response meaning greater pressure to the nerve once the heat is removed and thus causing more pain.

Extension exercises:

Most people today live the majority of their lives sitting in front of a computer screen, working at a desk, driving, reading, or watching television – all of which are basically the same exact “C” posture. This can cause all the symptoms we are discussing and more. Find time each day to stand up or at least sit up straight in your desk chair, roll your shoulders back and drop them down (this will open up your chest and lungs), tuck your chin to your chest and extend your head back (imagine someone pulling your head straight up to the ceiling by a string), and roll your hips forward. In this posture take several deep breaths and repeat frequently throughout the day.

Additionally, a nutritional regiment of **quality fish oil** (for neurological as well as total body health), relaxation techniques such as **deep breathing exercises or yoga** and **daily “intentional” exercise** should be part of the game plan.

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