

HOW CHIROPRACTIC WORKS IN YOUR SLEEP

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What a topic! ...OK here we go:

When we are asleep the special sense organs display different perceptive input to the brain, from waking hours. Either they block or alter sensory input - so stimulation is minimal. (Special sense organs would be eyes, ears, nose, etc.)

For example, the eyes can't see when you darken your room and close the eyes (though the visual part of the brain may be actively "seeing" dreams), and the ears are not getting any major input unless the sound is loud or significant enough.

This is not so for the joint receptors. We have to be aware of gravity. We have to know where we are in space. That's why we don't fall out of bed! Thus joint, muscle and ligament receptors around the spine are active all the time.

Poor spinal function or spinal nerve irritation (**subluxation**) may feed *nociceptive* (pain) input to the brain. If pain is feeding into the nervous system this will have an effect of altering input to the brain that is **constant** and does not shut off when we sleep. You can treat the pain with drugs, which may have short term beneficial effects but adverse long term effects.

Pain can also disturb the part of the brain that controls alertness and consciousness. The *reticular formation* can be stimulated excessively by pain and actually keep the brain from going into a "lower" conscious state to permit sleep. That is why one of the common reports after an adjustment is "I was tired, fell to sleep quickly, and had a good nights sleep".

So the effects of chiropractic during sleep are real. Beneficial because if the spinal joints are irritating the nervous system because of misalignment, poor function or pain, the chiropractic adjustment can correct this leading to restoration of proprioceptive joint input into the brain and over ride the pain input that actually alters consciousness.

So chiropractic care is essential for the normality of signals coming from the spine that map out body positioning in space while we sleep. Its also true that if the spine is under any joint stress that a painless night of sleep is unlikely, and many people may develop insomnia because of spinal subluxation.