

The Atlas of Life  
presents

**TRAUMA,  
THOUGHTS,  
&  
TOXINS**  
The E-Book

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE VERTEBRAL SUBLUXATION

The chiropractic fundamentals are based on removing interference to the nervous system so that the body's Innate Intelligence can operate at full capacity.

Interference comes by way of vertebral subluxations.

Sometimes a misalignment can be mistaken for a vertebral subluxation. For a example, sometimes it is thought that a vertebral subluxation can be seen on an x-ray.

That is incorrect. Only a misalignment can be seen on x-ray, whereas a vertebral subluxation has a far-reaching effect greater than that of a simple bone out of place.

B.J. Palmer cleared up this confusion in the early 1930s when he found that vertebral subluxations have five components to them. They are:

- 1.) **Malposition** – This simply means a misalignment of a vertebral segment.
- 2.) **Occlusion** – This refers to the closing off of an opening that a nerve passes through. In our case, we are referring to the neural canal where the spinal cord travels down.
- 3.) **Pressure** – When C1 or C2 is misaligned, this can occlude the neural canal near the brain stem. This can cause pressure or tension on the cord at this level.
- 4.) **Interference to flow of nervous system transmission** – With a misalignment, an occlusion, and pressure, there is zero chance for the nervous system to properly communicate to the rest of the body.
- 5.) **Three-directional torqued vertebra** – To achieve these four components of vertebral subluxation, the C1 or C2 vertebrae has to shift up or down, left or right, and rotated front or back.

#### **What causes a vertebral subluxation?**

Stress. Pure and simple. Various forms of stress bombard our bodies on a daily basis. If not dealt with properly, they can and will manifest themselves in the form of a vertebral subluxation.

For intensive purposes, I will discuss three forms of stress: **physical**, **emotional**, and **chemical**.

## CHAPTER 1

### TRAUMA aka PHYSICAL STRESS

Today we will talk about **physical stress**. Physical stress always begins at birth. The newborn baby has to wiggle and slither, torque and twist his/her way out of the vaginal canal to enter this world. That's if it happens naturally.

Many times during a hospital birth, a doctor (or in our case with our third, a nurse midwife) will grab the baby's head and tug and twist until that baby is yanked free. And we haven't even mentioned forceps, vacuum extraction, or c-section yet.

The C1 vertebrae is the most unstable vertebrae in our spine, connected only by muscles, tendons, and ligaments. With any kind of extreme twisting, turning, or yanking, that vertebrae WILL misalign in three directions, which will result in occlusion, pressure, and interference.

Beyond birth, once the baby begins crawling, standing, walking, running, and climbing, he/she will fall literally thousands of times by the age of four. My eight month old falls every few minutes. I know because of her lovely shrieking each time it happens.

As we get older, and get into sports, or exercising, or just plain old every day life, injuries occur. For example, getting tackled in football, smacking into the fence while trying to catch a pop fly, slipping and falling on an icy sidewalk, getting T-boned by a semi in a busy intersection, etc. Even natural everyday motion such as walking can have a negative long term effect. Years and years of gravity pulling down on your body will take its toll.

The point is, we can't afford to go through life without at least getting checked for interference to our nervous system. We haven't even addressed emotional or chemical stress yet, but physical stress beginning at birth and continuing on into adulthood can and will have long-term devastating effects on your overall well-being.

Next, we will cover the effects of **emotional stress** on the body and how that can result in a vertebral subluxation.

## CHAPTER 2

### THOUGHTS aka EMOTIONAL STRESS

Emotional stress is an unavoidable part of life. Loved ones will pass away. Downsizing at the workplace will continue to happen as companies merge, fail, and outsource. Family trouble, marital troubles, routine work deadlines, bills, student loan debt... the list goes on and on and on.

Learning how to deal with these day-to-day stressors is paramount. Here's why.

#### **Fight or Flight**

Our bodies have something called the "fight or flight" mechanism. This is an automatic response by your body in cases of extreme stress.

Some examples would be coming across a bear in the middle of the woods, getting mugged in a dark alley, or nearly getting hit by an oncoming car.

Your body responds in such a way that you are literally, in a split second's time, equipped to fight or flee your way out of a perceived deadly situation.

Your body responds by instantly releasing adrenaline and cortisol throughout your body. These hormones cause your heart to pump faster and your breathing to increase. This allows more oxygen and blood to the muscles used for fighting or fleeing. It keeps them ready to react at the blink of an eye. Your liver releases sugar into the blood so your muscles can have that instant energy. You begin to sweat more, cooling down your body. Your metabolism speeds up, your tolerance to pain increases, and your senses are keener.

While these responses are great in a deadly situation, they are not great over long periods of time. A day to day continual fight or flight response over days, months, or years will cause your nervous system to write checks the body eventually won't be able to cash. This will open the door for any number of disease processes to begin.

This is what chiropractors mean when they speak of a body being in **dis-ease** before it develops into **disease**.

#### **Wearing Down**

These reactions are carried out through the sympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system is one of two parts to your autonomic nervous system. The other is the parasympathetic nervous system, which carries out bodily functions while at rest. Ideally, we always want to be in a parasympathetic state. This allows our bodily functions like digestion and peristalsis to carry on without hindrance.

When we are always in a state of stress, our sympathetic nervous system runs the show. Constant secretion of adrenaline and cortisol, tension in the muscles, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and increased sugar release into the blood wears the body down over a long period of time. Because we are in this stressed state, we don't sleep as well. With less sleep, our bodies can't heal properly, and our immune system can't bear the load. We then become more susceptible to lingering effects from bacteria and viruses.

With our body in a weakened state, our Innate Intelligence can only do so much. When the matter that is your body is limited to much less than its potential, true healing and health can never be experienced. Normal external forces that our body's Innate Intelligence usually deals with (i.e. gravity, bumpy car rides, coughing, and sneezing) become too much for our bodies to handle.

The end result? A vertebral subluxation that interferes with the nervous system's already depleted communication to the body.

As I said earlier, we can't afford to go through life without getting our nervous systems checked on a regular basis. That takes care of the physical part, but what about the emotional?

## **Coping With Stress**

A positive mental attitude is a good place to start. Keeping yourself from getting down about your circumstances can be difficult at times, but it is necessary. We all go through rocky times, but life is sometimes about enduring through the hardships.

Exercise is one way to keep your spirits up. It is impossible for you to feel depressed once you start moving. The body releases endorphins (natural opiates) that naturally help you feel good. Yoga is another great way to release tension brought on by emotional stress. Deep breathing, meditation, and prayer are also other good ways to settle down mentally and allow your parasympathetic nervous system to take over.

Next, we will cover the effects of **chemical stress** on the body and how that can result in a vertebral subluxation.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **TOXINS aka CHEMICAL STRESS**

Toxins are around us at every corner. They are in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, in our medicine cabinets, our bodies... you name it, and toxins are there.

So how do we avoid toxins?

First off, let's make one thing perfectly clear. We will never be able to avoid all toxins. Life happens and so do toxins. You might as well forget about taking control of every single thing that enters your body right now.

There will be days that no matter how much fresh organic juice you make in your Jack LaLanne juicer, no matter how many miles you run, no matter how long you meditate, you still might walk through a cigarette smoker's exhaled, yet lingering nicotinic cloud, or breathe in fumes from some old clunker's exhaust, or shower in city water full of prescription drug remnants and fluoride.

That being said, you can actually control a number of toxins from entering your body. Let's begin with the most toxic.

#### **Prescription Drugs**

In 1992, the average American got an average of seven prescriptions per year. In 2008? That number went up to 12. This is a 71% increase, which amounts to an extra \$180 billion in sales for pharmaceutical companies.

Being on 12 prescription drugs is not health. In fact, that is completely toxic to your health, and any MD who says differently is giving unethical advice and should be jailed. Health does not come from a pill or a bottle. It is an outside-in approach, a way of treating the effect, that will never produce the desired effect... which is a healthy lifestyle.

I don't care how skillfully that guy in the Cialis commercial can throw a football through a tire, Cialis is not good for you. It doesn't matter how good of a time those four old guys are having on their vacation, cholesterol lowering medications are a cover-up in dealing with the real issue: a disfunctioning liver due to terrible diet and lifestyle decisions.

Let's take a look at the popular drug fluoxetine, more commonly known as Prozac. This drug is commonly used for major depression (including pediatric depression), obsessive-compulsive disorder (in both adult and pediatric populations), bulimia nervosa, panic disorder and premenstrual dysphoric disorder.

Prozac is a selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor (SSRI), and the fourth of its kind when Eli Lilly released it to the public. When the first two SSRIs on the market were withdrawn due to side effects, Eli Lilly went on a fierce marketing campaign to make sure fluoxetine was looked at as a major scientific breakthrough in popular culture. Also, they made it appear as if fluoxetine was the first SSRI to be introduced to the market, when it was not.

Below is a list of side effects associated with Prozac, not often realized because of its acceptance in our society:

Drowsiness, Chronic Trouble Sleeping, Excessive Sweating, Head Pain, Feel Like Throwing Up, Diarrhea, Nervous, Feeling Weak, Anxious, Itching, Joint Pain, Muscle Pain, Fever, Chills, Rash, Trouble Breathing, Nightmares, Feeling Restless, Problems with Eyesight, Ringing in the Ears, Abnormal Heart Rhythm, Stuffy Nose, Dry Mouth, Incomplete or Infrequent Bowel Movements, Inability to have an Erection, Painful Periods, Sun-Sensitive Skin, Hair Loss, Dizzy, Low Energy, Involuntary Quivering, Taste Problems, Temporary Redness of Face and Neck, Loss of Appetite, Weight Loss, Increased Hunger, Fast Heartbeat, Cough, Chest Pain, Throwing Up, Gas, Frequent Urination, Stomach Cramps, Numbness and Tingling, Confused, Sexual Problems, Altered Interest in Having Sexual Intercourse, Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome, Serotonin Syndrome – Adverse Drug Interaction, Hepatitis caused by Drugs, Inflammation of Skin caused by an Allergy, Erythema Multiforme, Seizures, Swollen Lymph Nodes, Abnormal Liver Function Tests, Reaction due to an Allergy, Allergic Reaction causing Serum Sickness, Low Blood Sugar, Low Amount of Sodium in the Blood, Increased Risk of Bleeding, Behaving with Excessive Cheerfulness and Activity, Mild Degree of Mania, Having Thoughts of Suicide, Loss of Memory, Flu-Like Symptoms, Weight Gain, and Mood Changes.

Altered interest in having sexual intercourse? Hepatitis caused by drugs? No thank you.

To be fair, most of these side effects are rare. But if someone were to take this drug for 15-20 years, I suspect the rare side effects become everyday business as usual.

Is it any wonder that Ely Lilly needed to embark on a fierce marketing campaign to con the public into believing in this worthless and dangerous drug?

## **Food and Drink**

Along with prescription drugs, this subject could take up multiple blog posts for weeks. Food in our society is not what it once was. In fact, most food we eat is not really food. Look no further than the aisles at your local grocery store. Packaged goods with ingredient lists full of words understood only by hardcore chemists line the shelves at every corner.

Ingredients like monosodium glutamate (MSG), phenylketonuronic acids aka phenylalanine aka aspartame, L-cysteine, high fructose corn syrup, red #40, and yellow #5 frequent all sorts of packaged goods such as Hamburger Helper, diet sodas, whole wheat bread, frozen microwaveable dinners, most cereals, and more. These things do not occur in nature.

For example, MSG was originally derived from seaweed as a salty additive to foods. But now, it is mass-manufactured by the tons through an industrialized fermentation process of starch, sugar beets, sugar cane, or molasses. MSG is the single salt form of glutamate, an amino acid found in protein rich foods, as well as in your body. It is an excitotoxic substance that can raise your blood glutamate levels up to 20 times the normal limit. It might also be responsible for making cancer cells more mobile and contributing to or even causing cardiac arrhythmias,

among other things.

But here's the sneaky part: MSG can be in your food under different guises. The manufacturers of this chemical know the negative public perception of the three letters M-S-G, so they were able to get laws passed that allowed them to disguise MSG as yeast extract, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, and textured protein, to name a few.

But even if you avoid the aisles in the grocery stores, the produce can be just as bad. Pesticides are used generously on fruits and vegetables grown around the world. While we all grow up learning to wash our produce before eating it, you can't wash off or wash out all the pesticides.

There is something called the dirty dozen in regards to produce. This is referring to foods containing the highest amount of pesticides. They are, from most to least: peaches, apples, bell peppers, celery, nectarines, strawberries, cherries, kale, lettuce, grapes (from outside the United States), carrots, and pears. These are not the only foods containing pesticides, just the foods with the most. All conventional produce will contain pesticides to some degree.

Then, we get into the subject of genetically engineered food. Again, this could be more blog posts in and of itself. I will simply refer you to the movie *Food, Inc.* It is a little bit like in the movie the Matrix, when Morpheus offers Neo the choice between the red pill (the truth) and the blue pill (return to the status quo). Food, Inc is akin to taking the red pill (thanks to Dr. Scott Brady for that metaphor).

## **Avoiding the Chemicals**

As I said earlier, we can't always avoid everything around us. Many of us live in cities with high rates of pollution, or our homes may have hidden mold that we don't know about (common in Texas). What we can do is avoid the things we do have control over.

Prescription drugs, unless ABSOLUTELY necessary, are not necessary. Not the purple pill or the green pill or the yellow pill. Not one pill or seven pills or twelve pills. I might sound a little like Dr. Seuss, but I am serious. God doesn't make defective junk that only pharmaceuticals can cure. In fact, the word **pharmaceutical** itself is derived from words meaning something along the lines of witchcraft. Not very scientific if you ask me.

When in the grocery store, avoid the aisles and buy organic produce if possible. Jack LaLanne has a saying that goes something like this: "If man made it, don't eat it." Grocery store aisles are filled with man-made food and you're better off staying out of them. Organic has become somewhat of a hip and cool pop culture term, but still your best bet when it comes to pesticide free food.

Next, I'll conclude this e-book with a list of things you can do to minimize or avoid physical, emotional, and chemical stress.

## CHAPTER 4

### MANAGING THE STRESS IN LIFE

In this last chapter, we will explain how to successfully manage stress that comes into your life. Let's begin with the most obvious.

**Chiropractic** – Keeping the nervous system free of interference is one of the most important things you can do for your health. When the nerve channels are blocked by the vertebral subluxation, your Innate Intelligence cannot operate at its full capacity. When that happens, your immune system is weakened and your overall functionality is compromised. So remember to get your nervous system checked!

**Clean Diet** – Keeping your diet free of preservatives, additives, pesticides, and genetically modified food is one of the other important things you can do for your health. Our bodies crave and need nutrient-dense, unaltered food. Organic is the best way to go when it comes to produce. Avoiding the grocery store aisles is another.

**Clean water** – Our bodies are anywhere from 2/3 to 3/4 water depending on what reference you read, so it only makes sense that you drink a lot of water during the day. I won't tell you to drink 8 cups of water a day because that may be too much or too little. Only your body knows. But it requires that you listen to it. When you get thirsty, instead of reaching for a Mountain Dew or Sprite, go for some clean, filtered water. Your body will thank you.

**Exercise** – I won't tell you what exercise to do or how long to do it, but I will tell you to just do it. It could be going for a walk with the kids, running, body weight exercises such as push-ups and pull-ups, kettle bell workouts, sprinting, mowing the lawn, yoga, martial arts, swimming, bicycling, etc. Getting your body moving is a key to health and the more you do it, the better you feel and the more you want to do it.

**Quality Sleep** – Kind of funny that I'm writing this on the tail end of an all-nighter with the kids. Our bodies need the opportunity to rest, heal, and regenerate from the previous day's events. Without this healing period, our bodies begin to break down, not just physically, but mentally. Our bodies begin to ache and our immune systems weaken. Our moods begin to sour and we begin to take on a feeling of hopelessness. For young parents (including myself) sleep can often be a precious commodity that is hard to obtain. So getting sleep whenever an opportunity arises sometimes takes priority over straight sleep throughout the night.

**Meditating** – This is often overlooked by many people in our fast-paced society. I know... I overlook it often, but I recognize this as a place for improvement. Taking some time each day

to sit in silence and focus on a peaceful state of mind will refresh and calm you. You will be better equipped to deal with the stresses of the day after having done this.

**Sex** – This may garner snickers from readers, but it is true. Sex has been shown to lower stress by lowering blood pressure and the risk of a heart attack. It has been shown to boost immunoglobulin A (IgA) levels, which in turn help your body resist colds and other infections. Sex has also been shown to reduce pain because of increased levels of oxytocin, which causes an increase in natural endorphins in your body. Sex reduces the risk of prostate cancer risk for you men. And it helps you to sleep better.

In short, healthy people have frequent sex. As B.J. Palmer often stated, “Enuf said.”

**Have Fun and Enjoy Life** – Enjoying life is imperative. The United States is notorious for its people taking the least amount of vacation days per year of any country in the world. We are an overworked and overstressed society. It is vitally important to remember to have fun and enjoy the things and activities that bring joy and happiness. This could be a trip to the zoo with the kids, a game of basketball with some friends, or reading a good book. Whatever you think is fun, make sure you do it as often as time allows.

Here’s a story to put this suggestion into perspective:

*A boat docked in a tiny Mexican fishing village.*

*A tourist complimented the local fishermen on the quality of their fish and asked how long it took him to catch them.*

*“Not very long.” they answered in unison.*

*“Why didn’t you stay out longer and catch more?”*

*The fishermen explained that their small catches were sufficient to meet their needs and those of their families.*

*“But what do you do with the rest of your time?”*

*“We sleep late, fish a little, play with our children, and take siestas with our wives. In the evenings, we go into the village to see our friends, have a few drinks, play the guitar, and sing a few songs. We have a full life.”*

*The tourist interrupted, “I have an MBA from Harvard and I can help you! You should start by fishing longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra revenue, you can buy a bigger boat.”*

*“And after that?”*

*“With the extra money the larger boat will bring, You can buy a second one and a third one and so on until you have an entire fleet of trawlers. Instead of selling your fish to a middle man, You can then negotiate directly with the processing plants and maybe even open your own plant. You can then leave this little village and move to Mexico City, Los Angeles, or even New York City! From there you can direct your huge new enterprise.”*

*“How long would that take?”*

*“Twenty, perhaps twenty-five years.” replied the tourist.*

*“And after that?”*

*“Afterwards? Well my friend, that’s when it gets really interesting, ” answered the tourist, laughing. “When your business gets really big, you can start buying and selling stocks and make millions!”*

*“Millions? Really? And after that?” asked the fishermen.*

*“After that you’ll be able to retire, live in a tiny village near the coast, sleep late, play with your children, catch a few fish, take a siesta with your wife and spend your evenings drinking and enjoying your friends.”*

*“With all due respect sir, but that’s exactly what we are doing now. So what’s the point wasting twenty-five years?” asked the Mexicans.*

*And the moral of this story is:*

*Know where you’re going in life... You may already be there!*

## **Conclusion**

We live in a health-challenged society, but that doesn’t mean we have to be health challenged ourselves. Learn more about the stress-reducing techniques I suggested here and apply them to your lives as best you can. No matter your circumstances, you deserve to be healthy and happy!