Chiropractors care for patients with health problems of the neuromusculoskeletal system, which includes nerves, bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons. They use spinal adjustments and manipulation, and other techniques to manage patients' health concerns, such as back and neck pain.

Chiropractors typically do the following:

- Assess a patient's medical condition by reviewing their medical history, listening to the patient's concerns, and performing a physical examination
- Analyze the patient's posture, spine, and reflexes
- Conduct tests, including evaluating a patient's posture and taking x rays
- Provide neuromusculoskeletal therapy, which involves adjusting a patient's spinal column and other joints by hand
- Give additional treatments, such as applying heat or cold to a patient's injured areas
- Advise patients on health and lifestyle issues, such as exercise, nutrition, and sleep habits
- Refer patients to other healthcare professionals, if needed

Chiropractors focus on patients' overall health, believing that misalignments of the spinal joints interfere with a person's neuromuscular system and can result in lower resistance to disease, as well as other conditions of poor health. Some chiropractors use procedures such as massage therapy, rehabilitative exercise, and ultrasound in addition to spinal adjustments and manipulation. They also may apply supports, such as braces or shoe inserts, to treat patients and relieve pain.

In addition to operating a general chiropractic practice, some chiropractors concentrate in areas such as sports, neurology, orthopedics, pediatrics, or nutrition, among others. Chiropractors in private practice are responsible for marketing their businesses, hiring staff, and keeping records.


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