

their insurance companies pay for Cadillac care.

However, it is a complicated issue because insurance companies often require objective evidence in the form of testing to support further chiropractic care. My view is that beyond whatever initial testing is necessary to rule out a serious condition, repeated expensive tests like MRIs and nerve conduction should only be performed if the results will likely change the treatment, or if required by an insurance company.

Even Homer Simpson Becomes a Chiropractor

The medical establishment has two big problems with chiropractic. First, it does not think there is any hard science behind the subluxation theory as the cause of disease. Maybe not, but there are hundreds of articles in the best sense of “evidence-based medicine” and “controlled trials” that demonstrate the effectiveness of chiropractic on soft tissue (i.e., muscle and ligament) injury. In my opinion, chiropractic has much more science and better results than a wide range of medical interventions like the laminectomies and fusions performed by back surgeons.³⁹ There is a double standard here, as the majority of medical therapeutics is not supported by controlled clinical trials which are the gold standard of medical science. (See Chapter 8 for more about this.)

But the bigger complaint the medical and especially the insurance establishment has against chiropractors is over treatment. This idea has even made it into pop culture. There is an episode of *The Simpsons* where Homer goes to a chiropractor who tells Homer he has to come for treatment three times a week for the rest of his life. Over the years, the insurance industry and the federal government have come up with a variety of approaches to stop the alleged over treatment of patients by chiropractors.

Early on, many insurance companies put limitations on the number of chiropractic visits they would pay for. But remember, the chiropractors are tough and do not just roll over and take it. In response, the chiropractors

³⁹ See, for example, Fritzell P, Olle Hägg, Wessberg P, Nordwall A, *SPINE* 2001; 26:2521–2532, which shows that surgical back fusions actually worsen a condition over time and are less effective than chiropractic in conjunction with other nonsurgical modes of intervention.