

Chiropractic Services Relieve Low Back Pain in Female Veterans: Study

Legislation to expand access to chiropractic in the VA gains new momentum

Arlington, Va.- [A new study](#) finds that female veterans—one of the fastest growing populations receiving treatment through the Veterans Administration (VA) health care system—experience improvement in low back pain with a course of chiropractic care, according to the American Chiropractic Association (ACA).

Published in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, the study's authors note that musculoskeletal conditions such as back pain are the most common ailments among female veterans. They also report that female veterans on average access VA medical care more frequently than male veterans, have a higher outpatient cost per patient and have a higher rate of service-connected disability.

“Although further research is warranted,” the study says, “chiropractic care may be of value in contributing to the pain management needs of this unique patient population.”

Chiropractic services are one of the conservative (non-drug) treatment options for pain offered in the VA. They are available at half of the major VA medical facilities in the United States.

Efforts to expand chiropractic services to veterans recently gained new momentum in Congress. Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), ranking member of the Veterans Subcommittee on Health, and Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), have joined forces to broaden the range of services and care options available to veterans by supporting the Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act ([H.R. 103](#)). The bill—supported by several major veterans groups—would require chiropractic services to be offered at all U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers and codify chiropractic care as a standard benefit for veterans using VA health care. There is a bipartisan companion bill in the Senate ([S. 609](#)).

“Chiropractic’s non-drug, non-addictive and noninvasive approach to pain management can help alleviate disabling pain and improve function,” says ACA President David Herd, DC. “That’s why chiropractors are an important part of the health care team in the VA.”

Chiropractors focus on disorders of the musculoskeletal system, most often treating complaints such as back pain, neck pain, pain in the joints of the arms or legs and headaches. Widely known for their expertise in spinal manipulation, chiropractors are also trained to recommend therapeutic and rehabilitative exercises, and to provide dietary and lifestyle counseling.