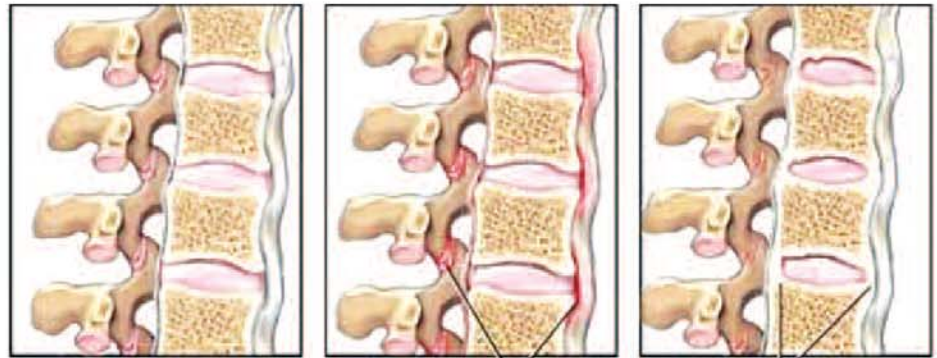


Arthritis of the spine? There's hope for you yet

By DR. MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

MOST people generally accept arthritis, especially in their spine, as part of the normal aging process. They have gone on to believe that there is no real cure and that arthritis is something they are stuck with for life. This is simply a myth. There may be a solution to reversing and preventing arthritis after all.

While certain types of arthritis can be from genetic breakdown, they are rare and uncommon which only a small percentage of the population will be stricken with. The most common types of spinal arthritis that people suffer with are "osteoarthritis" and



From left: a normal spine; early stage arthritis; and advanced arthritis where the bones start fusing

"degenerative disc disease". Although both types sound like two very different conditions, they are in fact the same thing – inflammation ("wear and tear") of the joints and discs of the spine.

Arthritis of the spine seems to be so common that either you have been diagnosed yourself or know someone who suffers from this potentially debilitating condition. Masking the pain with medications or simply giving up is not the solution to the problem.

Ever wonder how the tires on your car suffer from wear and tear? The answer is in the alignment. Any mechanic will tell you that if you do not fix the alignment in your car, tires will begin to wear and tear more on one side than the other. Furthermore, if the alignment is left unfixed it will lead to steering and handling problems, suspension and traction instability, and most importantly braking problems. By fixing the alignment in your car, you are safe to drive.

The same holds true for your spine. Wear and tear or arthritis of the spine is the result of abnormal spinal alignment. When the spine is out of its normal alignment, there is an abnormal amount of stress and strain on bones, joints, and discs of the spine. If left untreated, your spine will go through a painful progression of degeneration that will last a lifetime. Here's how: There are four distinct stages of spinal degeneration (arthritis).

Normal Healthy Spine:

- No wear and tear
- Equal disc spaces between bones

HEALTH & FITNESS

- Normal range of motion (such as rotation and bending)
- Normal strength of muscles and ligaments
- No nerve damage

Stage I (Mild) Arthritis:

- Loss of normal alignment
- Decreased motion in one or two ranges
- Weakening of muscles, ligaments, and discs
- Start of pain and muscle tension
- Leads to more aggressive arthritis if left uncorrected

Stage II (Moderate) Arthritis:

- Noticeable loss of normal alignment
- Decreased motion in more than two ranges
- Unequal disc spacing
- Corrosion of smooth boney edges ("bone spurs")
- Episodes of pain more frequent with possible numbness and tingling

Stage III (Severe) Arthritis

- Complete loss of normal alignment
- Disc spaces severely worn down
- Bones are noticeably deformed with bone spurs
- Numerous episodes of pain, extreme muscle tension, and numbness and tingling
- Marked reduction of all ranges of motion
- Activities of daily living limited

Stage IV (Uncorrectable) Arthritis:

- Complete spinal devastation
- Prominent bony fusion
- Disc spaces completely degenerated
- Permanent nerve irritation

While Stages I - III are correctable, Stage IV arthritis is not. This stage is the worst possible arthritis you can have where discs and joints have rotted to the point that the bones rub up against each other and fuse, which can no longer be separated. Fortunately, for people who are in Stages I - III there is greater hope for correction. Correcting alignment at an early age can save you from years and years of pain and degeneration. Keeping your spine aligned will keep you healthier. **W**

• Dr. Michael Schwartz is the director of Corrective Chiropractic Health Centre in Vaughan. For further information about arthritis of the spine, you can reach Dr. Schwartz at (905) 264-0024 or visit www.CorrectiveChiropractic.ca.

The Spine Corporation

The 1st & Only SCOLIOSIS CORRECTIVE BRACE



SCOLIOSIS SUFFERERS STRUGGLING WITH HARD BRACES & TOUGH CHOICES FINALLY HAVE A BETTER, MORE COMFORTABLE SOLUTION

TREATMENT OPTIONS	OUTCOME	COMPLICATIONS
HARD BRACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT PROVEN TO STOP THE PROGRESSION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STIFF & UNCOMFORTABLE • NOTICEABLE UNDER CLOTHING • DIFFICULT TO PUT ON OR TAKE OFF & CLEAN
SURGERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STOPS THE PROGRESSION • PERMANENT SPINE IMPAIRMENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • METAL RODS, WIRES, HOOKS AND/OR SCREWS • LUNG PROBLEMS, INFECTION, NUMBNESS, CHRONIC PAIN AND/OR PARALYSIS
SPINECOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCOLIOSIS CORRECTION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLEXIBLE & COMFORTABLE • UNNOTICEABLE UNDER CLOTHING • EASY TO PUT ON AND TAKE OFF & CLEAN

SPINECOR IS NOW AVAILABLE AT:



3883 RUTHERFORD RD (AT WESTON RD) WOODBRIDGE | 905-264-0024

Call Now for a Free Consultation

www.ScoliosisSpecialists.ca