

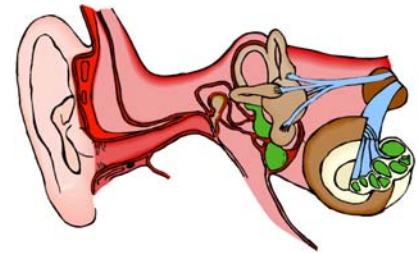
OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Wayne Terai

Chiropractic for Ménière's Disease

Ménière's disease is a disorder of the inner ear, characterized by vertigo or dizziness, inner ear pressure, hearing loss, ringing in the ear (tinnitus) and nausea. The disorder primarily attacks people during middle age. However, it may strike at any age.

Fortunately, research shows that chiropractic care is an effective, all-natural strategy for alleviating Ménière's disease. Dr. Terai wants patients to know about this exciting research.



The Ear - Cut Away View

Mysterious Ménière's

The cause of Ménière's is a mystery. The culprit may be abnormal fluid volume in the inner ear, but the factors that spark this change are unknown. However, a mounting body of research indicates that dysfunction in the spine may play a major role.

The Spinal Connection

Dr. Terai explains to patients that the upper spinal bones (vertebrae) of the neck are called cervical vertebrae. The two cervical vertebrae lying directly beneath the skull are known as C1 and C2. These bones are chiefly responsible for rotation and flexibility of the head and neck.

If these vertebrae become even slightly displaced or their motion restricted, symptoms of Ménière's may ensue. Why? Many nerves transmit through the upper cervical spine to and from the brain. Dysfunction in this region may disturb the natural flow of nerve impulses to and from the brain and structures, including the ear.

One theory suggests that spinal misalignment irritate a specific nerve called the eighth cranial nerve, which originates in the base of the brain near the upper neck. This nerve (also known as the vestibulocochlear nerve, the auditory nerve and the acoustic nerve), is responsible for transmitting

information about sound and balance between the brain and the inner ear.

Injury Not Necessary

Although injury often causes misalignments of C1 and C2, misalignment may also occur in the absence of injury. These two vertebrae have a challenging day job. The head relies on these bones to move and support its weight, which can equal that of a light bowling ball! That's a daunting task, especially considering C1 and C2 only weigh a few ounces.

The Chiropractic Solution

Chiropractic care focuses on correcting *vertebral subluxations*, dysfunctional segments in the spine. It's a condition that occurs when vertebrae are out of place or not functioning properly. Through *chiropractic adjustments*, maneuvers specially designed to restore motion and correct misaligned vertebrae, doctors of chiropractic, such as Dr. Terai, correct vertebral subluxations.

Research Shows Chiropractic Helps

Exciting new research demonstrates that chiropractic adjustments, especially to C1 and C2, may be wildly successful at eliminating Ménière's disease.

As part of the investigation, research-

ers followed 139 patients who began suffering symptoms of Ménière's following a trauma, most often an automobile injury. All participants were diagnosed with Ménière's by medical doctors specializing in the ear, nose and throat.

The patients underwent a chiropractic evaluation, including x-rays of the cervical spine. A whopping 130 out of 139 individuals were found to have a vertebral subluxation in the spine of the upper neck.

Even more fascinating, the patients all had the same type of subluxation, in which the C1 vertebra moves slightly back and down to one side. In all cases, the vertebra slid to the side opposite the affected ear.

After only one or two chiropractic adjustments an impressive 136 out of 139 patients reported a complete resolution or dramatic reduction of symptoms (*JVSR* 2010;11:1-10).

Additional Evidence

In one study of 259 patients with "well-defined" upper cervical subluxations and vertigo, 15 percent suffered significant hearing loss. And a substantial 40 percent experienced loss of hearing in lower frequencies.

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Of the group, 62 underwent chiropractic care and enjoyed dramatic improvements. “Results indicate that these hearing disorders are reversible... The therapy of choice is chiropractic manipulation of the upper cervical spine,” conclude the authors (*HNO* 1994;42:604-13).

In another report, a 75-year-old woman with a history of vertigo, tinnitus and hearing loss sought chiropractic care. Five weeks before initiating care, her symptoms had progressively intensified.

Researchers noted “significant decreases” in hearing and misalignment in the upper cervical spine. “Through the course of [upper cervical-specific chiropractic] care, the patient’s symptoms were alleviated, structural and functional improvements were evident through radiographic examination, and audiologic function improved.”

The conclusion was that “the clinical progress documented in this report suggests that upper cervical manipulation may benefit patients who have tinnitus and hearing loss.” (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2000;23:352-62.)

TMJ

Research indicates that Ménière’s disease has a clear association with dysfunction of the temporomandibular joint (TMJ). TMJ is the joint between the head of the lower jawbone and the temporal bone.

Patients with TMJ disorders are likely to suffer from tinnitus and vertigo, muscular tension in the jaw and neck, as well as pain in the face, temples or jaw.

Fortunately, chiropractic care is a tried and true method for eliminating TMJ disorders.

Other All-Natural Solutions

In addition to chiropractic care, here are some other all-natural remedies.

Slash Stress

Emotional stress is strongly tied to

Ménière’s disease. When 110 Ménière’s patients completed multiple anxiety and stress profiles, all subjects demonstrated more daily stressors; employed fewer coping strategies; suffered from increased anxiety and depression; and had a worse quality of life, compared to healthy reference groups (*Int J Audiol* 2006;45:496).

Reduce Salt Intake

Excess sodium increases fluid retention. Limiting salt consumption may help, based on the theory that Ménière’s disease symptoms may result from excess fluid in the inner ear. Read product labels to determine salt content and avoid any foods with MSG (monosodium glutamate).



Avoid Alcohol, Caffeine and Nicotine

Patients report that eliminating alcohol, caffeine and nicotine can do wonders to reduce symptoms.

Exercise

In addition to reducing stress, exercise improves balance, circulation, blood flow and muscle strength. Exercises that bolster coordination, such as walking or running, are very beneficial for Ménière’s sufferers.

Ask the doctor to recommend other specific exercises to promote balance and ward off vertigo.

Hydration

Drinking an adequate amount of water may alleviate two key symptoms of Ménière’s disease: vertigo and hearing loss.

In a two-year study, 18 Ménière’s disease patients drank 35 mL/kg of water per day, while 29 Ménière’s sufferers consumed a conventional

amount of fluids and took a diuretic (drug to increase urine excretion).

Individuals in the water group enjoyed “dramatically relieved vertigo and significantly improved ... hearing,” compared to controls. “Deliberate modulation of the intake of water may be the simplest and most cost-effective medical treatment for patients with Ménière’s disease.” (*Laryngoscope* 2006;116:1455-60.)

Antioxidants

Antioxidants fight off the destructive effects of cell-damaging “free radicals” (unstable and highly reactive atoms or group of atoms).

Research indicates that patients with Ménière’s disease may have “a high concentration of free radicals and low natural defenses (e.g., antioxidant plasmatic capacity).” In the study, patients with tinnitus were divided into three groups: control, conventional therapy and antioxidant treatment, “and those in the antioxidant treatment group, especially those with Ménière’s syndrome, demonstrated a net and more significant improvement.” (*Int Tinnitus J* 2003;9:104-8.)

In another study, 25 patients took one of three free-radical scavengers: rebamipide (300 mg/day), vitamin C (600 mg/day) and/or glutathione (300 mg/day) for eight weeks.

“Of 22 patients, 21 showed marked improvement of vertigo; 12/27 ears showed improvement of hearing disorders; 17/27 ears showed improvement of tinnitus; and 18/25 patients showed improvement of disability.” (*Acta Otolaryngol* 2003;123:697-703.)

Remember to never start any supplementation program without first consulting your doctor of chiropractic.

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