Chiropractic Radiology

George Belle to natboards 07/04/2010 03:54 PM

History: This message has been replied to.

As one of the inaugural students of the International College of Chiropractic/Preston Institute of Technology,along side fellow students such as Allan Terrett and Lindsay Rowe,we all heard Dr Terry Yochum open his first class in radiology by saying "to see is to know, not to see is to guess." He also told us that one in seven patients have spinal anomalies or variations of normal, thus the fundamental importance of radiology to everyday Chiropractic practice. This is even before considering red flags, trauma and the three fold incidence of congenital malformations and scoliosis within families.

In a letter dated March 171982 ,Dr Yochum states "because a patient is younger in no way lessens the importance of adequate radiological examination to rule out the possibility of fracture,dislocation or neoplastic change.The radiation is justified by the history and the presenting symptoms of the patient." He goes on in general to then say "I can appreciate the concern expressed by many practitioners within the profession with additional views and radiographs,however,I have found in most cases the majority of these practitioners are not capable of taking these projections adequately or interpreting them and suggest that they shouldn't be taken under the guise of excessive radiation.I find this opinion to be ludicrous." I know the high esteem in which Dr Yochum was held within our profession as well the Friday afternoon Radiology Round Table at Melbourne's Austin Hospital when he was here.To this day I have never found reason to doubt his teachings.

Dr Don Freeman, our lecturer in nuclear physics, extolled the benefits and safety of high Kvp, low Mas and long focal distance x-ray procedures to minimise absorbed skin dosage. Accordingly, Chiropractic x-rays are the lowest dose and safest procedures whilst low Kvp, high Mas and short focal distance x-rays,such as mammograms,are the most dangerous especially to tumour cells. Additionally Chiropractors avoid or shield the three most sensitive organs to radiation, namely the reproductive organs, the thyroid and the retinas.

In August 2009, the National prescribing Service journal Australian Prescriber published a paper warning of wide spread overuse of CT Scans which expose patients to 400 times more ionizing radiation than a plain x-ray.

The acting chief executive of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, Mr Peter Burns, also stated that there could be large variations in different machines' output and "It can vary by about three or four times.....for the same procedure.)

These two facts together can combine to increase exposure factors for CT scans by up to 1600 times greater than the radiation used by Chiropractors.

Given all of the above,the miniscule absorbed dosage received by patients by properly positioned, filtered, collimated and shielded Chiropractic x-rays is the best guarantee and insurance for patient safety, trust and confidence. This goal is also totally aligned with the Board's role of protecting the public interest whilst using less than the radiation received on an international aeroplane flight.

May I request that the Chiropractic Board of Australia trust Chiropractors in the same way that the Medical Board of Australia trusts Medical doctors i.e. trust Chiropractors to do the right thing based on their clinical judgement and expertise rather than based on rigid,defined non chiropractic diagnostic criteria set by non Chiropractors.Failing this, may I request that the Chiropractic Board of Australia indemnify Chiropractors against litigation and malpractice in the event of an incident which, in part or whole,was the result of a lack of radiological information.

Dr George M Belle
Dip.App.Sc.,Dip.App.Sc.,B.App.Sc.,D.N.B.C.E.(USA)

FREE Animations for your email - by IncrediMail! Click Here!