

# THE Wellness Minute

Chiropractic Series: 4.2

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## Lower Back Pain Studies

### What Can a Medical Lower Back Pain Studies Possibly Tell Us About Chiropractic?

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) has recommended that patients who seek back pain treatment should consider chiropractic care before taking invasive measures such as electing for surgery. The surgical option should only be considered if conservative therapies fail. According to the JAMA, conservative alternatives like Chiropractic care should be the first “line of defense” because they are safer and more efficient in relieving pain.

The JAMA’s recommendation comes on the heels of a recent study out of the medical journal Spine where sufferers of lower back pain all received standard medical care (SMC) and half of the participants additionally received chiropractic care. The **researchers found that in SMC plus chiropractic care patients, 73% reported that their pain was completely gone or much better after treatment compared to just 17% of the SMC group.**<sup>1</sup>

Back pain can be anything from dull or sharp pain in your back or tingling or numbness that runs down your leg. These symptoms may indicate a pinched nerve which occurs when spinal bones are misaligned and/or the disc bulges out and puts extra pressure on the nerve that is exiting between the spinal bones.

Most lower back pain *does* start as uncomplicated and self-limiting, *however,*



however **waiting for the pain to resolve isn’t in your best interest.** The majority of patients wait too long because they think the problem will “just go away”, **causing undue pain and further joint damage.**

In another completely different study also published in the Spine Journal researchers found that “approximately **42.7% of workers who first saw a surgeon had surgery, in contrast to only 1.5% of those who saw a chiropractor**” first.<sup>2</sup>

With lower back pain it would be wise to think chiropractic first, medicine second, and surgery last.

1. Goertz, et al., *Adding chiropractic manipulative therapy to standard medical care for patients with acute low back pain: results of a pragmatic randomized comparative effectiveness study.* Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2013 Apr 15;38(8):627-34.
2. Keeney, et al., *“Early predictors of lumbar spine surgery after occupational back injury: results from a prospective study of workers in Washington State.”* Spine (Phila Pa 1976). :38.11 (2013):953-64.