



Injury Briefing

A review of the latest studies from Dr. Michael D. Berry.

Impact of Auto Injuries on Older Adults

Auto injuries are the second most common personal injury to land older adults in the emergency room. Every year, older adults make 250,000 visits to emergency departments after car accidents in the U.S. However, most studies on the effects of motor vehicle accidents focus on adults younger than 65, leaving questions about how best to treat and diagnose older patients.

A new study examined the effects of auto injuries on older adults, showing that while younger and older patients had similar levels of pain, older patients expected longer recovery times.

Researchers analyzed data from two prospective cohort studies involving patients in eight emergency departments in Michigan, Massachusetts, New York, and Florida. In total, 96 adults were categorized as “older” because they were over 65 years and 943 adults were categorized as “younger” because they were between the ages 18 to 64.

Compared to younger adults, older adults were:

- More likely to expect their recovery would take longer than 30 days—for both emotional and physical symptoms
- More likely to be transported by ambulance from the collision, and to report a greater sense of life threat
- More likely to report pain prior to the accident
- Less likely to experience back and neck pain, but more likely to experience chest pain
- Reported similar levels of overall pain, with 80% of older adults reporting moderate or severe pain vs. 82% of younger adults

It is also thought that older adults may experience greater Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and as a result of injuries that occurred during automotive accidents.

Additional research on the impact of auto collisions on older patients will enhance scientific understanding of the effects of these potentially life-threatening injuries. Chiropractic care is a non-invasive, safe solution for older adults that can help them treat many of the acute and persistent health effects of auto collisions, while also helping them avoid the possible short and long-term risks of surgery or drugs.

References:

Pereira, G, et al. Pain, distress, and anticipated recovery for older versus younger emergency department patients after motor vehicle collision.

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Case Study: Chiropractic for Neck and Jaw Pain

A new case study shows how chiropractic can cut pain for patients with neck and jaw symptoms. Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorder is a common complaint among patients with whiplash after auto injuries.

The study, published in the journal *Cranio*, involved a 23-year old female patient with a ten-year history of jaw pain and a five-year history of neck pain. The patient reported that her symptoms could reach a 10 out of 10 on a numeric pain rating scale, but that she her pain averaged 4 out of 10. The disorder made motions like opening and closing her mouth painful.

In the case study, the patient received treatment frequently offered by chiropractors, including passive mobilizations to the cervical spine and jaw, as well as a prescribed at-home exercise program. After just six sessions, her pain had virtually disappeared and her joint mobility improved.

This case study of course is just one example of how non-invasive chiropractic treatments can assist patients with TMJ disorder. In a 2013 study of 46 patients, researchers found that those treated with manual therapy were more likely to experience significant reductions in pain compared to a control group.

Whiplash is a multifaceted disorder triggering an array of symptoms. It's vital to seek care from a health care provider who can address the varied nature of whiplash, including TMJ pain. While chiropractors are best known for treating neck pain after auto accidents, this research demonstrates that chiropractors may assist in other related symptoms to enhance patient outcomes. omen to be the cause for sex differences chronic (whiplash)."

References:

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