

Why is the Cervical Curve so Important Anyway?

When we look at the neck as an individual area, chiropractic is focused on restoring the neck curve to its natural position, but why is this so important? To first discover this we need to look at the anatomy of the neck and what structures are contained there.

Nervous System- The nervous system in the neck area is very important, and controls many functions, including:

- Breathing
- Heart and vascular control
- Reflex control (coughing, swallowing, gagging)
- Muscle coordination (entire body)
- Balance
- Digestion
- State of arousal (sleep vs. awake)
- Muscle control, sensation, & blood supply to the head, neck, shoulders, arms, and hands

Muscular system- In the cervical area the first thing we note is that there is a large number of muscles that are responsible for fine movement and support of the head, neck and shoulders

Vascular system- In the cervical spine many important arteries and veins travel through, on their way to and from the brain, face, and neck. The arteries support and supply all the functions of the upper body and serve as the only means of survival for all the structures above the shoulders.

Now that we know what the different parts of the neck affect, we can look at how different physical and structural stress may impact one or even multiple functions.

When the curve of the neck begins to move away from normal it stretches and strains all the components of the muscular, vascular, and nervous system. When these areas are put under all this stress, these structures don't act like they should. When this happens, different signs of trouble start to pop up (ex. - High blood pressure, runny nose, headache, and many more). This is the body's way to tell us that something is not running right.

Research has shown that when the cervical curve is restored, stress is eliminated on the muscular system, the nervous system can communicate back and forth better, and the vascular system can supply blood and remove cell waste more efficiently to all the areas of the upper body. Therefore allowing all the important structures to function better.

The *only* way to naturally restore the curve of your neck is to see your chiropractor.