

I have discussed in previous columns how expensive our health care system is and how low we rank with regards to the health of our citizens compared to many other countries. There are many reasons for this disparity. I am proud to say that the chiropractic profession has proven to be part of the solution by providing effective care at a lower cost.

A recent study comparing elderly patients receiving chiropractic care compared to patients receiving only traditional medical care noted that those receiving chiropractic care reported better overall health, fewer days spent in a hospital and nursing home, used fewer prescription drugs and were more active. The chiropractic patients reported 21% less time in hospitals.

In 2003, Medicare spent \$278 billion. 45% of that went to hospital based care. If chiropractic provided a 21% savings in this cost, it would add up to 51 billion dollars saved annually.

Another study of patients 65 years old and older, evaluated the impact of chiropractic care provided for more than five years. It found that chiropractic patients spent 31% less on health care than those who did not use chiropractic care. The chiropractic patients also required 50% fewer visits to medical doctors.

In still another study, while those Medicare patients who used chiropractic care had more visits to their chiropractor than to their medical doctor, they spent less money for health care. The chiropractic patients averaged an overall health expense of \$4,426. The medical patients cost almost double that amount at \$8,103.

If we are going to solve our health care cost crisis, we need to utilize services that have been proven to provide effective care at a lower cost. Chiropractic continues to shine in this area and should be considered as an integral part of the health care regimen of today's health care consumer.

To read my previous articles go to www.lifetouchclinics.com.