

One of the biggest selling points for including chiropractic care as an insurance benefit has always been its cost effectiveness. Many studies have shown that chiropractic care reduces the overall cost of treatment for many conditions. There are a variety of reasons for this. One reason is that chiropractors typically order fewer MRI and CT scans which are costly procedures. Another is that chiropractic care reduces the need for surgery which is very expensive.

A third reason is beginning to surface and it may be greater than the previous two, both for reducing costs and for improving patient outcomes. Chiropractic care rarely results in negative side effects that require additional expensive care.

You may not realize this, but most insurance companies pay for the treatment of conditions caused by the treatment of other conditions. This adds significantly to Medicare and insurance company costs. That is about to change. Medicare has recently determined that it will not cover care caused by medical mistakes. It will still pay for care for side-effects that could not likely have been prevented, but for those that could have been prevented, it is closing its check book.

Some common preventable treatment related conditions include:

- Urinary tract infections from catheters - 500,000 cases each year.
- Blood clots - 140,010 cases this past year.
- Ventilator associated pneumonia - 30,867 cases per year.
- Bloodstream staph infections - 27,737 cases per year.

The urinary tract infections cost an additional \$451 million dollars a year. In total, it is estimated that these measures would save over 3 billion dollars per year. Approximately 250,000 preventable deaths are associated with these incidences each year and it is hoped that by not paying for the treatment of these events, hospitals will take even greater measures to prevent them and this in turn will save lives.

There are critics of this policy change, but at a time when the federal government is dramatically increasing its spending, the benefits of this policy may certainly outweigh the negatives.

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