

If America's Most Elite Athletes Receive Corrective Chiropractic Care, So Should The Worlds Most Elite Armed Forces?

By Dr. Dale Brown

As a member of Maximized Living Sports Council I was privileged to support members of USA Judo, Weightlifting, Wrestling and Sitting Volleyball as they went for gold in London. Over the past several years a select number Maximized Living doctors, including myself, have been providing specific chiropractic care for some of the top athletes within the US.

We have worked closely with several National Governing Bodies to deliver a holistic, whole-athlete approach to wellness that incorporates structural corrective chiropractic care, balanced nutrition, mental preparedness, and fitness programs designed to build strength, endurance and enhance performance.

The care we have been providing has primarily focused on one of the most critical structures of the human body, the spine. In addition to chiropractic research, medical and scientific research has shown a significant benefit to ongoing corrective chiropractic care by properly aligning and maintaining an optimal functioning spine and nervous system.

To clarify, we are not simply talking about "pain based" care, but "structural corrective" care. This method of care has shown to have enhancing effects on performance, productivity, recovery times, focus and mental clarity, decreased injury rates, and ultimately extending athlete careers through strengthening the overall structure and alignment of their spines.

Though I have enjoyed the opportunities to care for elite athletes, what I enjoy more is caring for what I consider to be the world's most elite Armed Forces!

Because I see so many Military personnel coming into my office to receive care for various health issues that stem from the physical demands they face from serving in the US Military, I have always asked the question "if the elite athletes of America are using specific chiropractic care for the enhancement of their performance and primarily the prevention of injury, why not the most elite Armed Forces of the world?"

As I continue to accumulate and review the existing research on the benefits of maintaining a healthy spine through corrective and preventive chiropractic care, I look forward to the day when the US Military fully incorporates chiropractic care as a preventive and restorative option.

Take for example the following:

Journal of Physiological Therapeutics 2010 Nov-Dec;33(9):640-3: Data accumulated from 85,000 Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Tennessee beneficiaries over a period of two years showed that when patients *initiated* treatment for low back pain with a doctor of chiropractic (DC) instead of a medical doctor (MD) costs were nearly 40% lower. When the national average spent on back pain is \$50 billion annually, that is a huge savings that could be achieved if only active and retired military could initiate care with a chiropractor instead of first having to go through other medical portals.

Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (JOEM) - Volume 53, Number 4, April 2011: "Health maintenance care provided by physical therapist or physician services was associated with a higher disability recurrence than in chiropractic services." This study found that when maintaining a back-related injury or condition, chiropractic was superior to all other forms of treatment.

Then take the comparison:

Journal **Spine**, 15 February 2011 - Volume 36 - Issue 4: "Lumbar fusion(surgery) for the diagnoses of disc degeneration, disc herniation, and/or radiculopathy in a Workers' Comp. setting is associated with significant increase in disability, opiate use, prolonged work loss, and poor RTW status" when compared to non-operated control subjects.

Then to really see a difference, **Journal of Physiological Therapeutics** (May 2007;00:1-7) showed that when patients underwent preventive, chiropractic care for 5 years or more, the average spending in healthcare was reduced to roughly 31% the national average! Results achieved: 60.2 percent less in-hospital admissions, 59.0 percent less hospital days, 62.0 percent less outpatient surgeries and procedures and 85 percent lower pharmaceutical costs when compared with conventional medicine.

On top of the previous research studies presented, structural/corrective chiropractic care has been shown beneficial for more than what most the US population even realizes.

I am currently writing a case study of a military member who was able to completely resolve a laundry list of health conditions after following through with care. To give you a brief history, Aleah, a 31-year-old US Army active-duty female presented with a five-year history of PTSD and stress-related symptoms, including: chronic neck and back pain, pelvic inflammatory conditions, anxiety, depression, immune deficiencies, insomnia, chronic-migraines, allergies, eczema, and pre-diabetes. The patient had previously been seen by over 7 different specialists on Fort Campbell and was treated with over 10 different medications of various types for the symptoms above. She even received, few and far between, chiropractic treatments at Fort Campbell. Despite all efforts by the previous doctors and specialists she achieved no benefit and was scheduled to undergo an MEB (Medical Evaluation Board). The major problem was that none of the treatments focused on improving the overall structure and function of her spine and nervous system, which happened to be the root cause of her conditions. As a result of the more specific chiropractic care and spinal rehabilitation, the patient was able to restore proper posture and structural stability to her spine. Thus resulting in an 80% recovery within two weeks and a complete recovery from all previously mentioned conditions in less than four months.

With the significant benefits that could be achieved with the health of our soldiers and military as a whole, implementing a large-scale system that would enable the US Armed Forces to receive frequent corrective chiropractic care is of critical importance.

This system will be a means to keep Soldiers from suffering the injuries that are inevitable due to the repetitive/ongoing trauma placed on their spines.

The Pentagon predicts that, under the current system, the cost of taking care of its troops and retirees will keep growing. So we must move forward and begin revolutionizing the way we maintain our Soldiers health!

I know the military is working hard to provide its members with better treatments and therapies. I pray that in the near future, we will provide the care our elite American athletes receive, to those I feel deserve it most, the men and women fighting to preserve our freedom!

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