

## *Revolutionizing Chiropractic Care: Implementing the Contemporary Brain Model in Practice*



Heidi Haavik BSc (chiropractic), PhD  
VP Research, Dean Research  
New Zealand College of Chiropractic

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Thank  
you!



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**Gifts**

**Gifts**

The **HANDOUT** for today's Class (the slides)

4



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## Key References for today's talk



Heidi Haavik, Nitika Kumari, Kelly Holt, Imran Khan Niazi, Imran Amjad, Amit N. Pujari, Kemal Sitki Türker, Bernadette Murphy. (2021a) The contemporary model of vertebral column joint dysfunction and impact of high-velocity, low-amplitude controlled vertebral thrusts on neuromuscular function. Invited Review. *European Journal of Applied Physiology*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00421-021-04727-z>

Heidi Haavik, Imran Khan Niazi, Nitika Kumari, Imran Amjad, Jenna Duehr, Kelly Holt. (2021b) The potential mechanisms of High-Velocity, Low-Amplitude, Controlled Vertebral Thrusts on Neuroimmune Function: A narrative review. *Medicina* 2021, 57, 536. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina57060536>

Imran Khan Niazi, Muhammad Samran Navid, Christopher Merkle, Imran Amjad, Nitika Kumari, Robert J. Trager, Kelly Holt, Heidi Haavik. 2024 A randomized controlled trial comparing different sites of high-velocity low amplitude thrust on sensorimotor integration parameters. *Scientific Report*. 14(1), p.1159. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-51201-9>




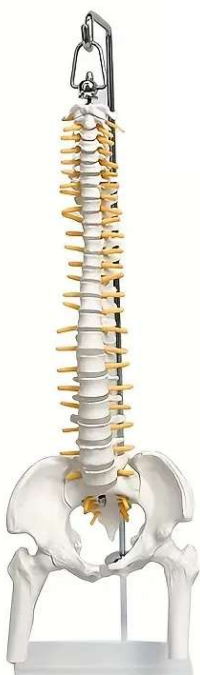
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Do you have a spine  
model in your practice?





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Do you have a brain model in your practice?




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## Outline



- What is the Brain Model of Chiropractic?
- How do you incorporate this new science into practice?
- How often, and for how long should we see our patients – according to the available science?
- The power of a single adjustment session
- Where in the brain do we find changes after chiropractic care?
- The latest brain network research
- Symptoms, and how they become a chronic problem, and how chiropractic care can help
- Future directions

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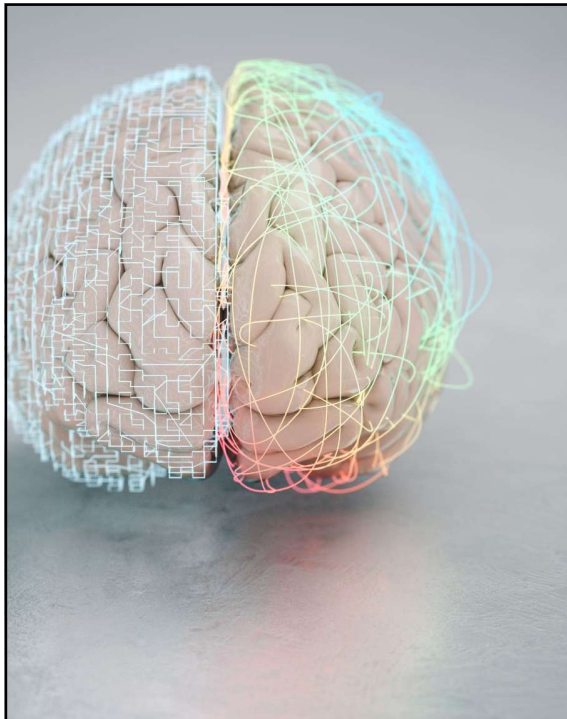


What is the  
Brain Model of  
Chiropractic?

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## Short Version What is Chiropractic?

"Research indicates that chiropractic care, that includes the adjustment of vertebral subluxations, enhances brain-body communication, allowing your brain to more accurately interpret internal and external signals. This improved perception of what is happening inside you and around you enables your brain to optimize bodily functions and adapt more effectively to your environment."

*Heidi Haavik*

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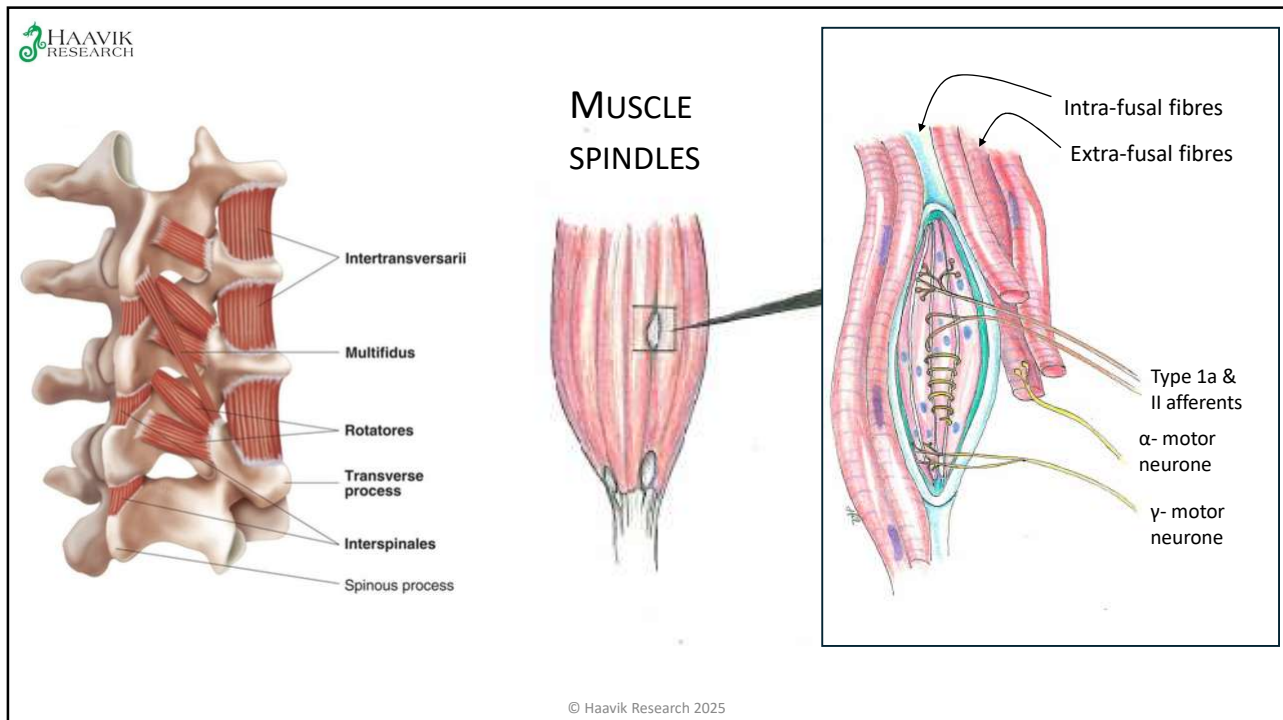


## Research indicates:

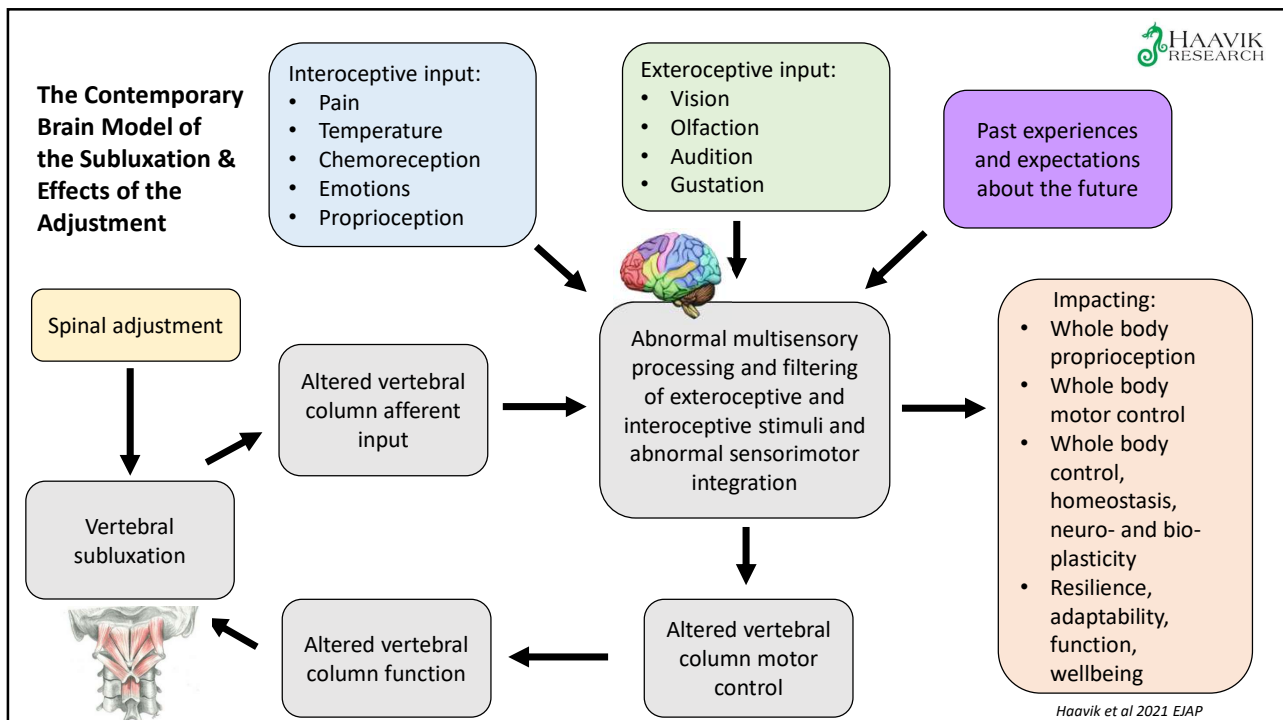
1. That chiropractic care, that includes the adjustment of vertebral subluxations,
2. Enhances brain-body communication,
3. Allowing your brain to more accurately interpret internal and external signals.
4. This improved perception of what is happening inside you and around you
5. Enables your brain to optimize bodily functions and
6. Adapt more effectively to your environment.

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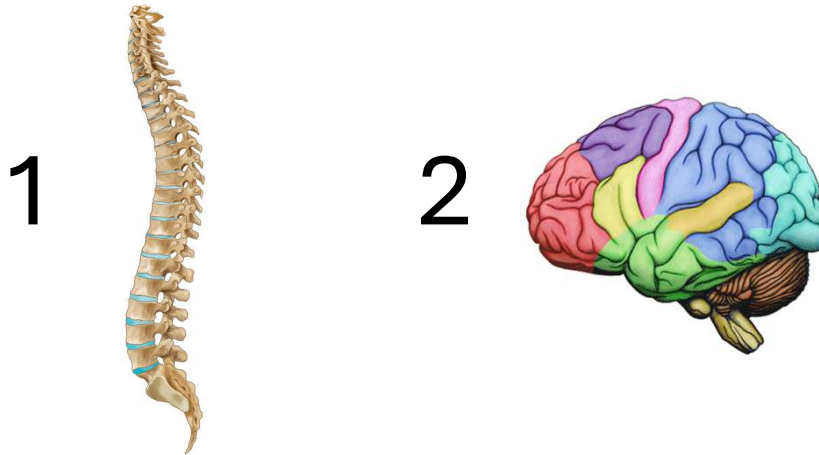


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## What is a Subluxation according to the science?



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## Vertebral Subluxation

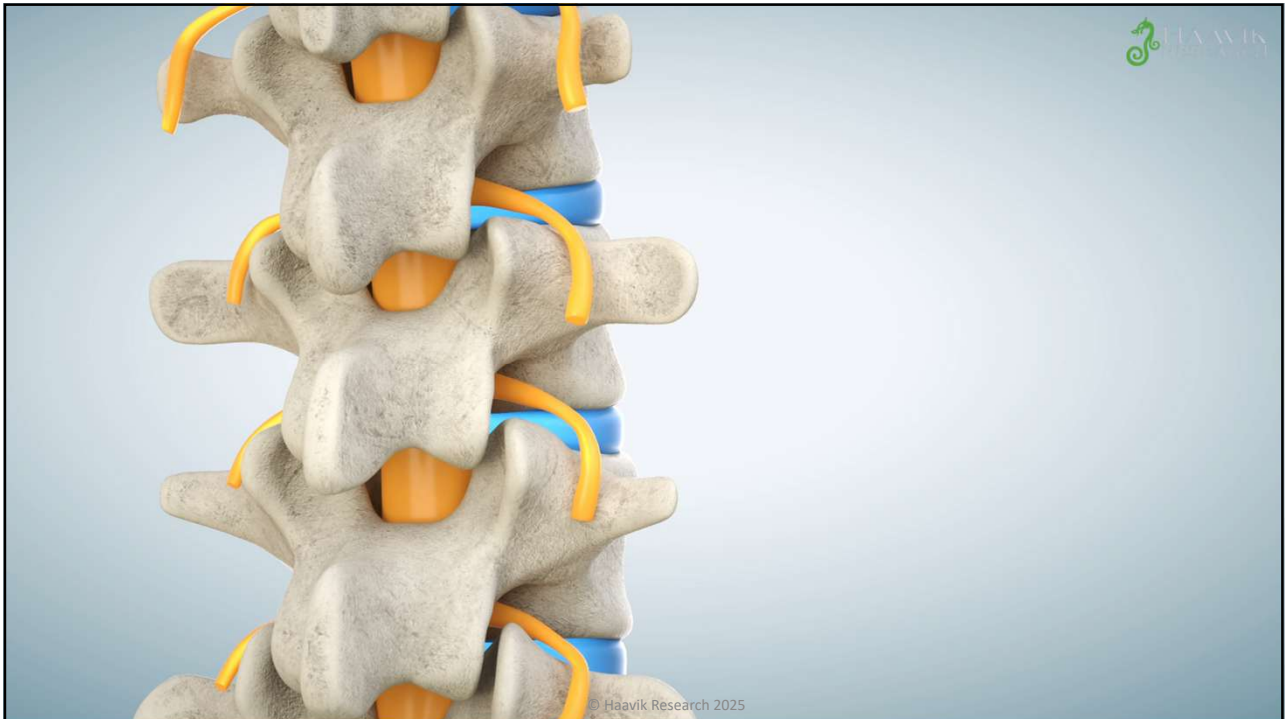
What is spinal dysfunction?  
What is normal spinal function?



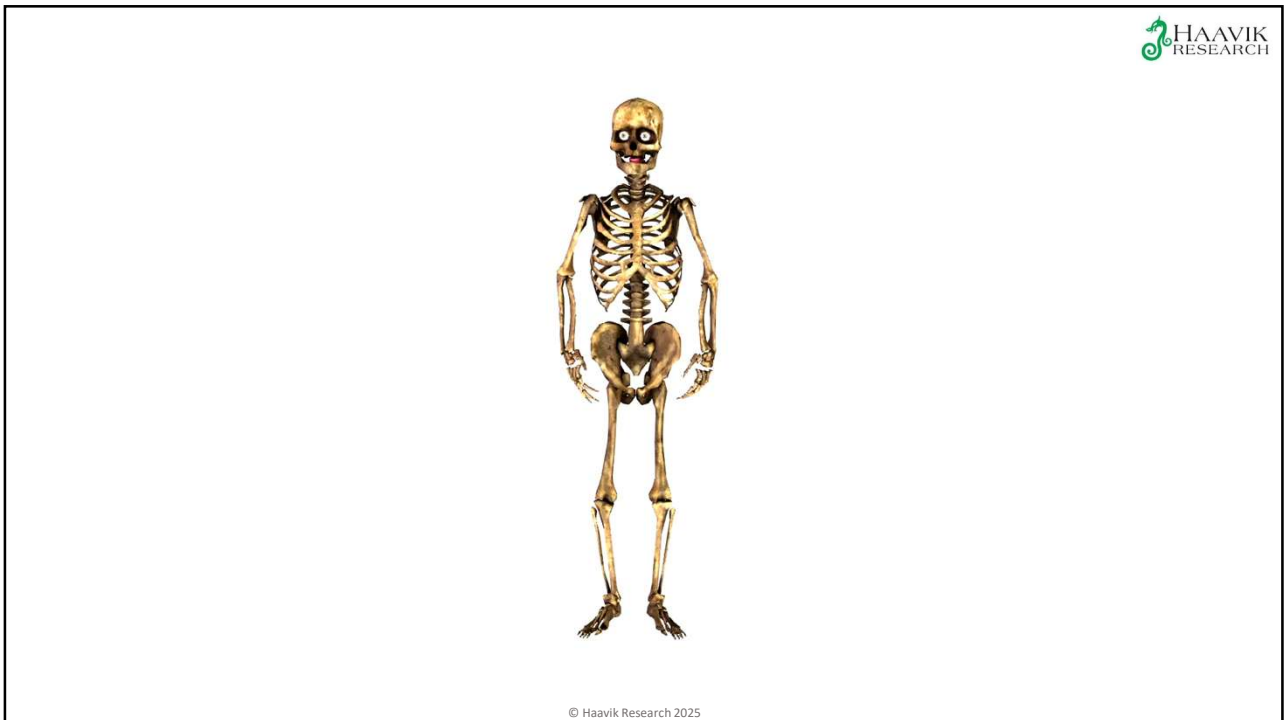
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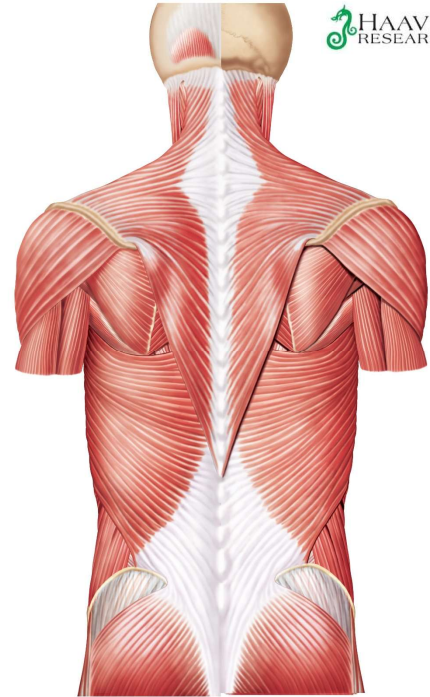
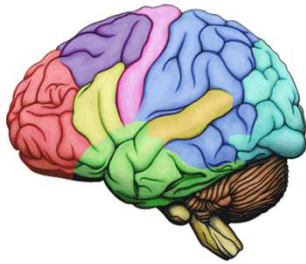


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**Bones do not  
move themselves**



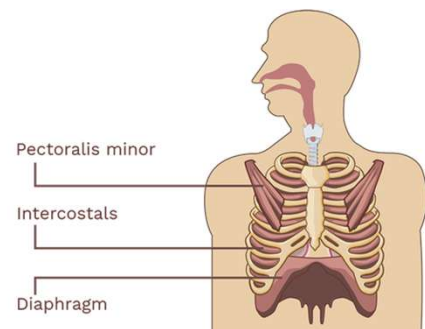
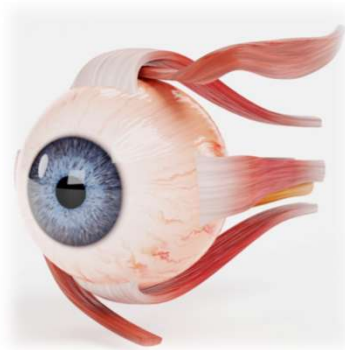
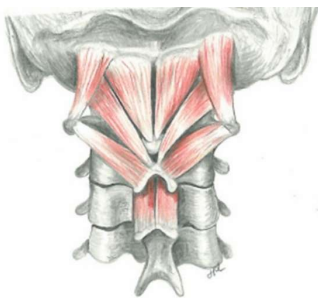
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**It is a complex system**

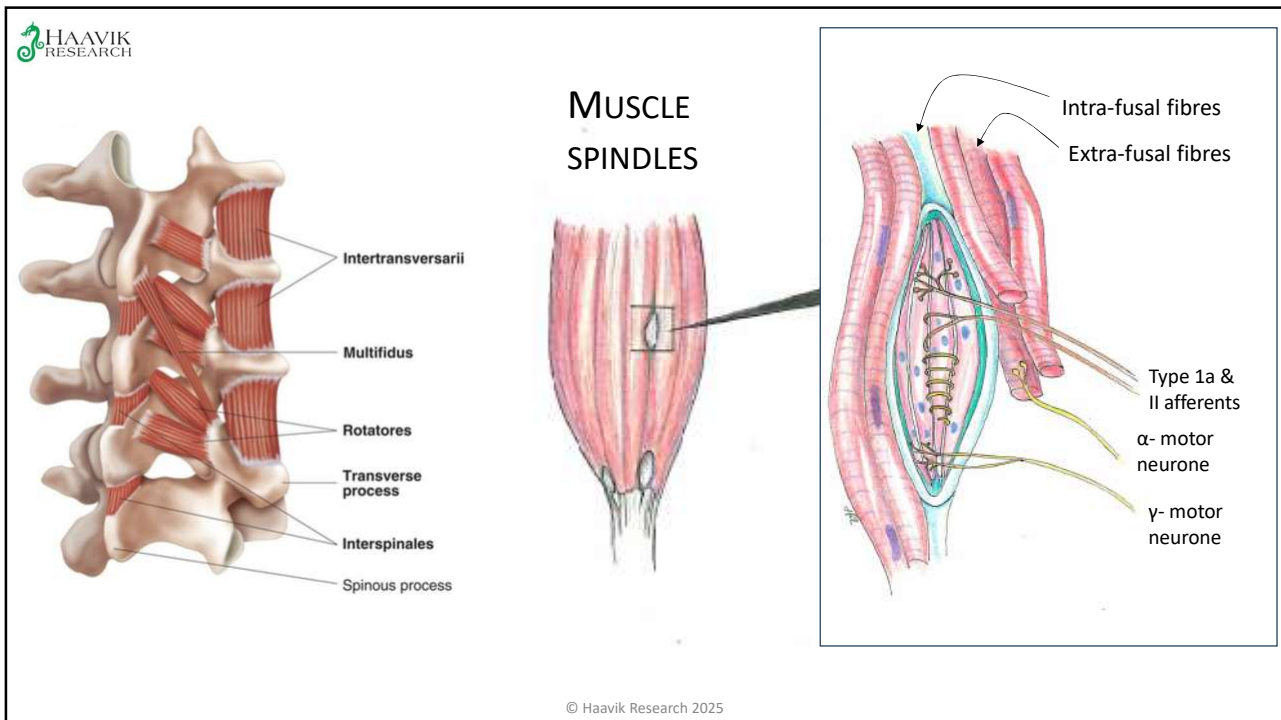
- Reactive
- Feed-forward (predictive)
- Tonic



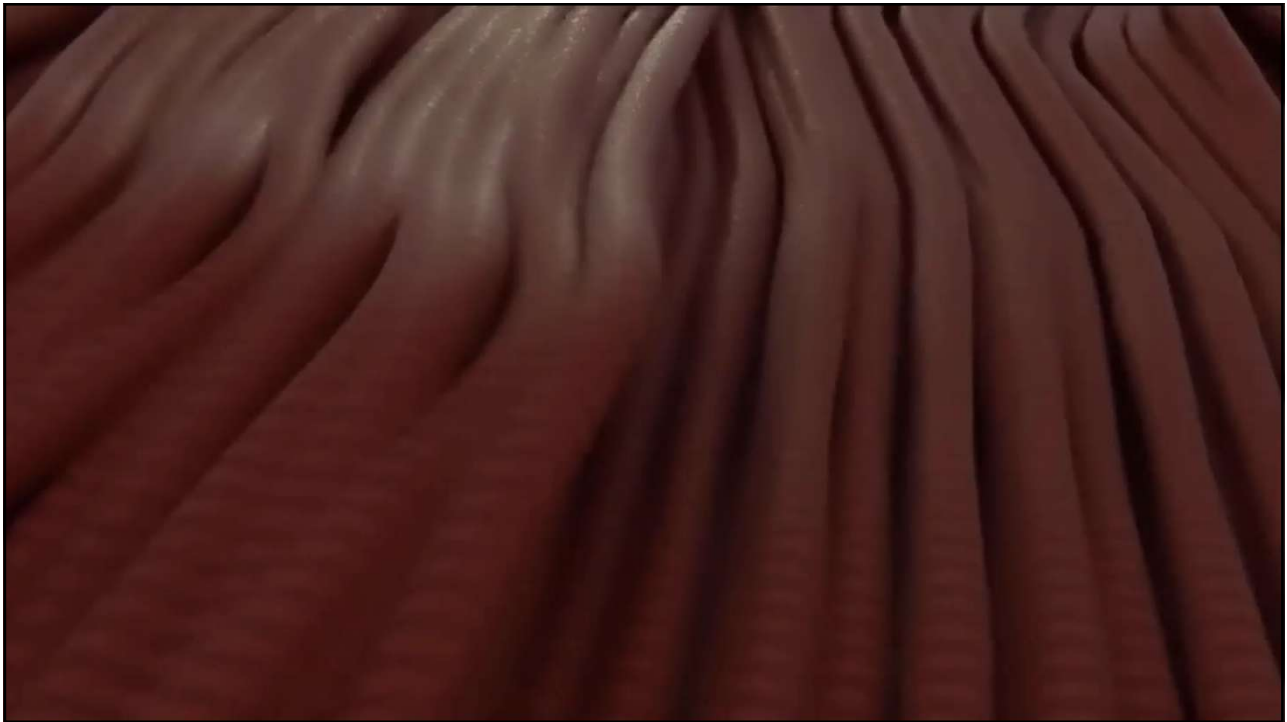
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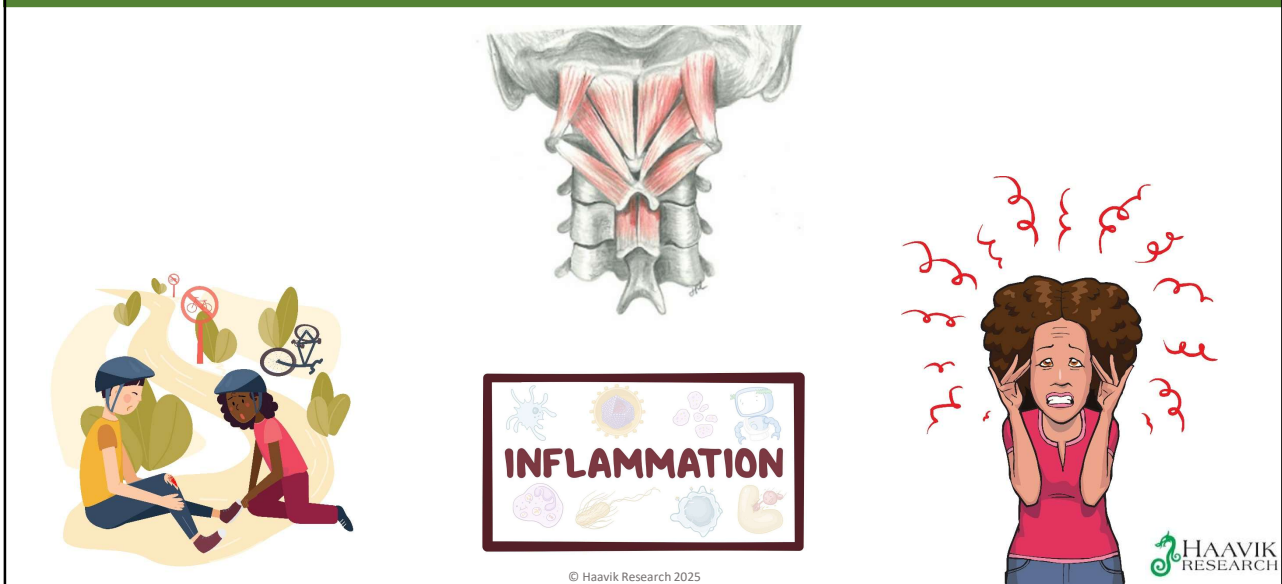
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## What can causes vertebral subluxations?



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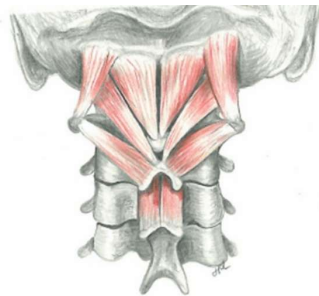
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## What happens when the spine dysfunctions?

Subluxated segment deep paraspinal muscles over time become:

- Stiff and Fibrotic
- Atrophied (shrunk)
- Fatty infiltration
- Change fibre type
- Degeneration around joint
- Stretch receptors dysfunction

↑  
**NOT Good**

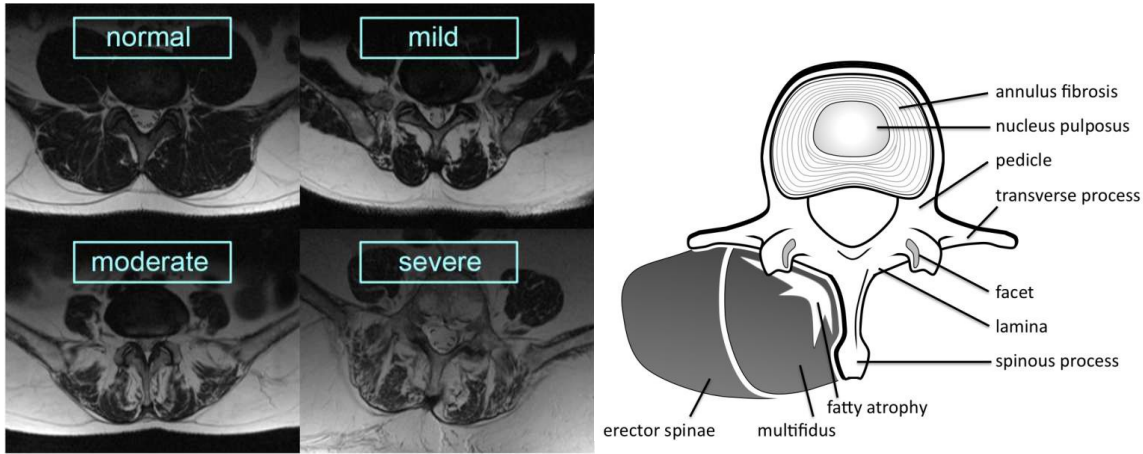


Deep paraspinal muscles around a 'healthy' segment are:

- Plump
- Larger in size
- Slow-twitch fibre type
- No fatty infiltration
- Move freely
- Healthy stretch receptors

↑  
**Good**

30



Faur, C., Patrascu, J.M., Horagus, H. and Anglitoiu, B., 2019. Correlation between multifidus fatty atrophy and lumbar disc degeneration in low back pain. *BMC musculoskeletal disorders*, 20(1), pp.1-6.

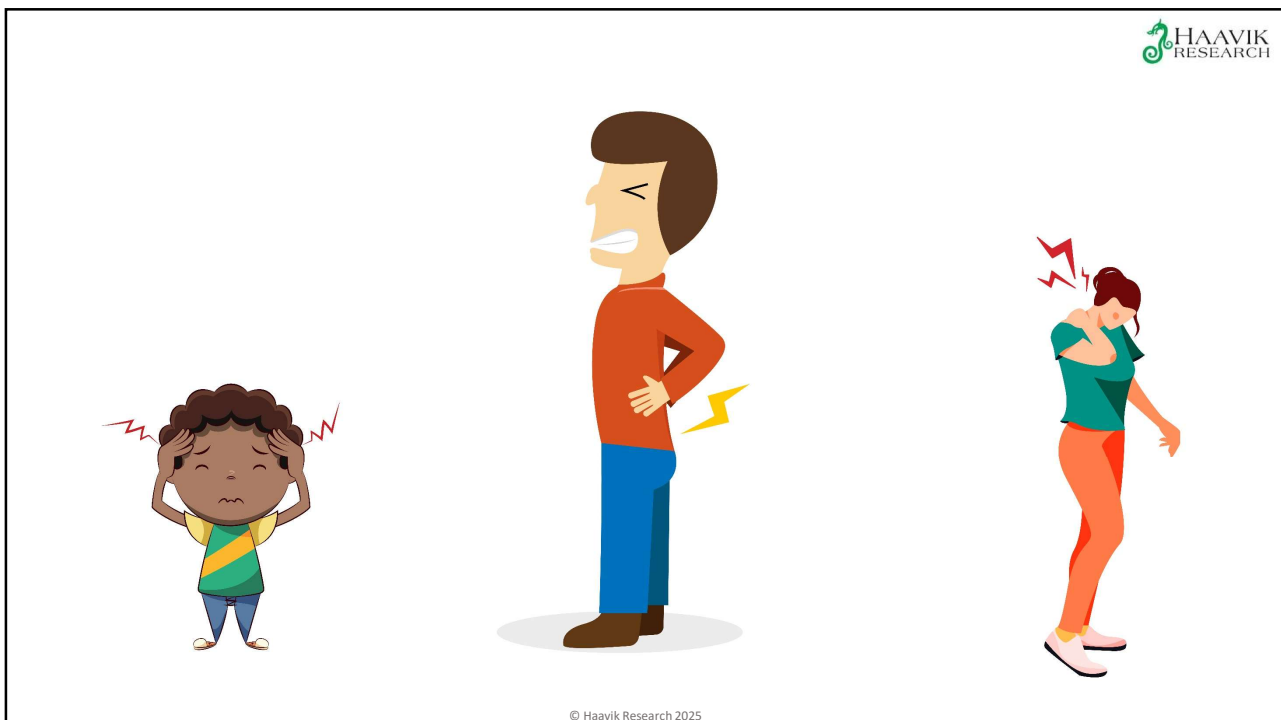
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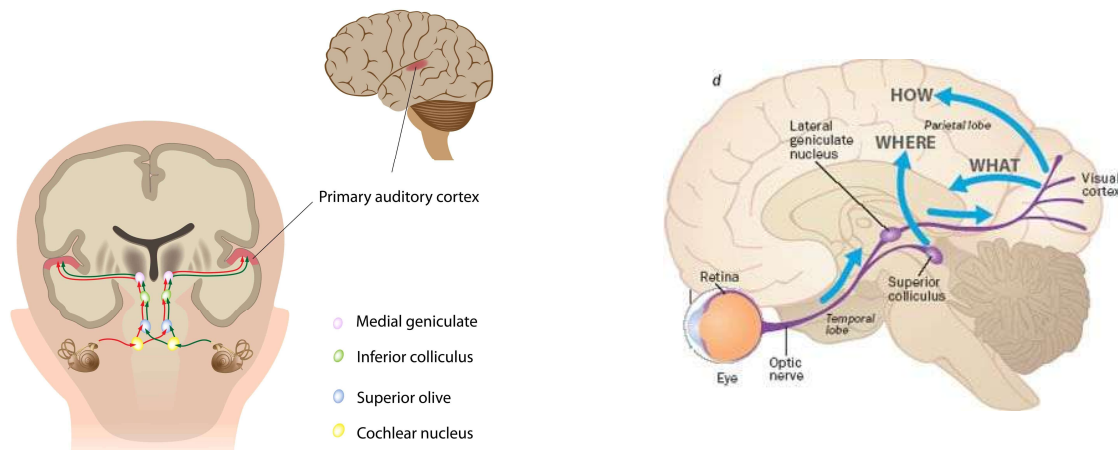


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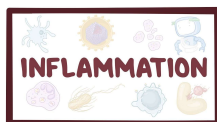
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## Interpreting sound and visual information

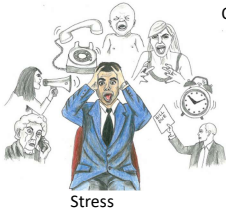


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OR

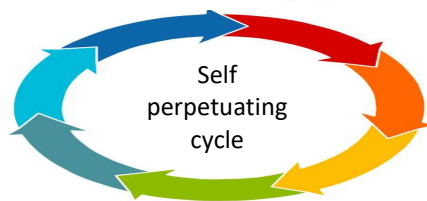
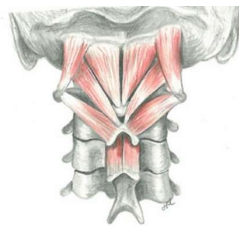


Stress



Injury

Small muscles closest to spine and skull  
go to sleep

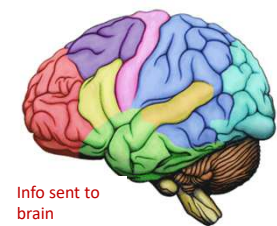


Poor body awareness  
Poor body control  
Poor function

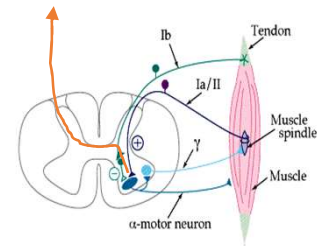
So brain does NOT  
know accurately  
what is going on



Changes brain's internal  
representations about what is  
going on inside and outside body



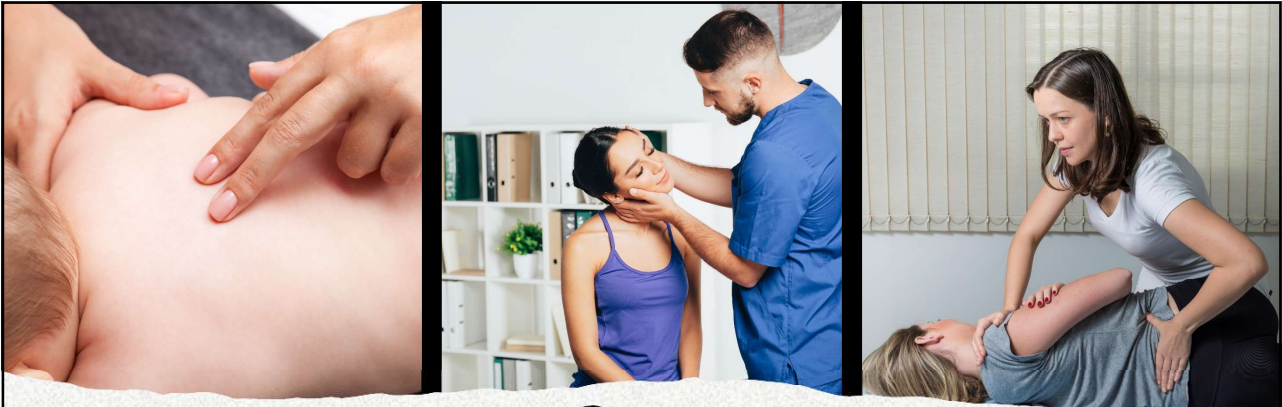
Info sent to  
brain



Altered messages going to brain  
from spine

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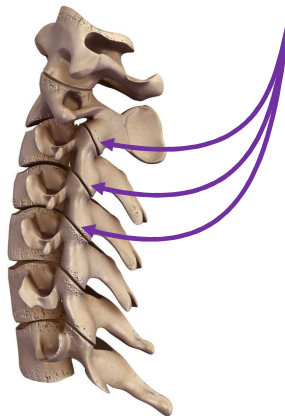


This is where your chiropractor can help

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The facet joints gap during a thrust and you get increased intersegmental ROM!



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Anderst et al. 2018 The Spine Journal.

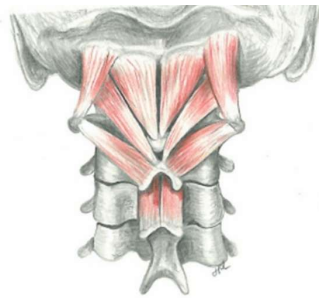
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## What happens when the spine dysfunctions?

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- Stiff and Fibrotic
- Atrophied (shrink)
- Fatty infiltration
- Change fibre type /function
- Degeneration around joint
- Stretch receptors dysfunction

↑  
**NOT Good**



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Deep paraspinal muscles around a 'healthy' segment are:

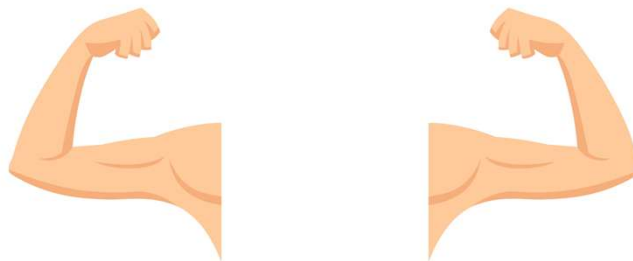
- Plump
- Larger in size
- Slow-twitch fibre type
- No fatty infiltration
- Move freely
- Healthy stretch receptors

↑  
**Good**

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It takes more than four weeks of exercise before you alter the morphology of the muscle

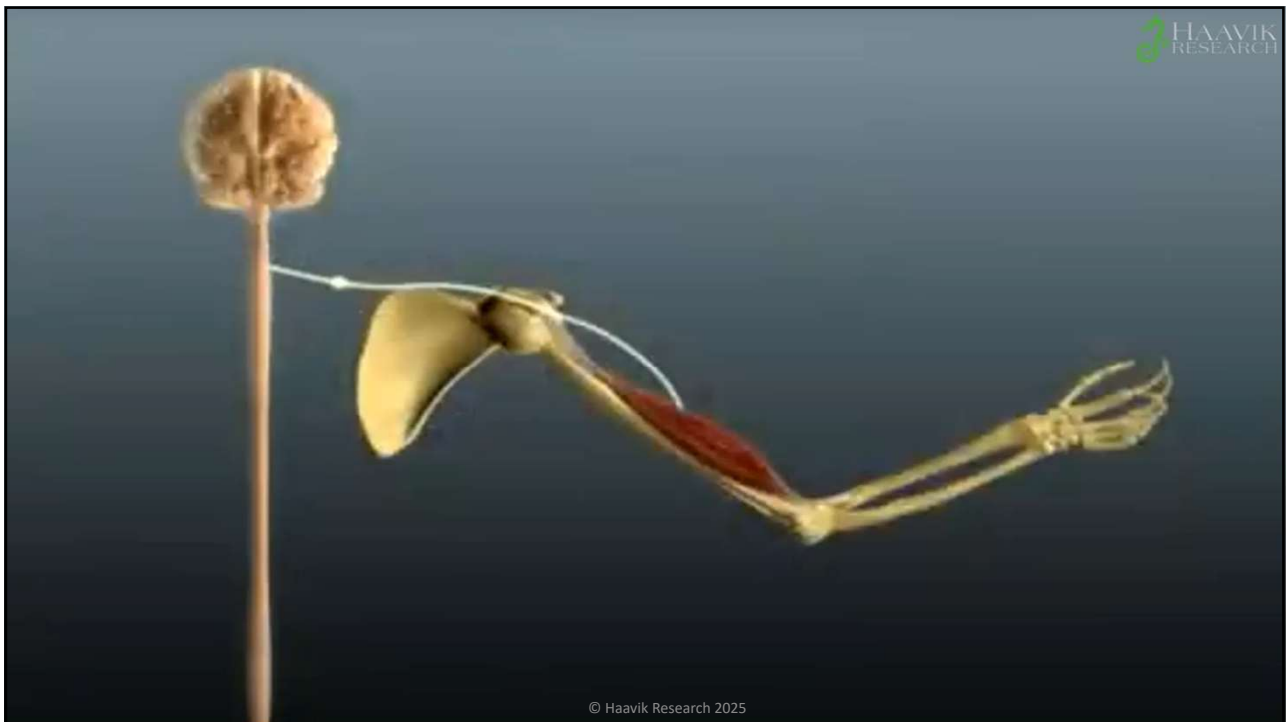
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Implications for practice!

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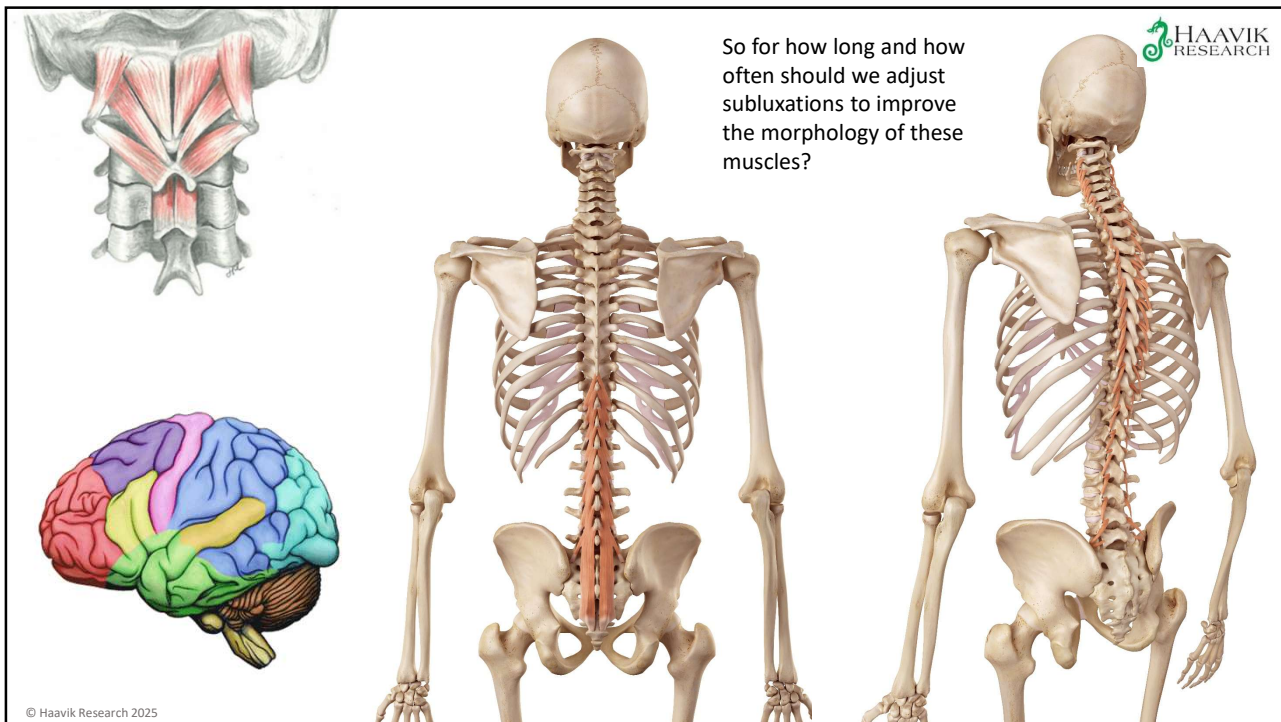


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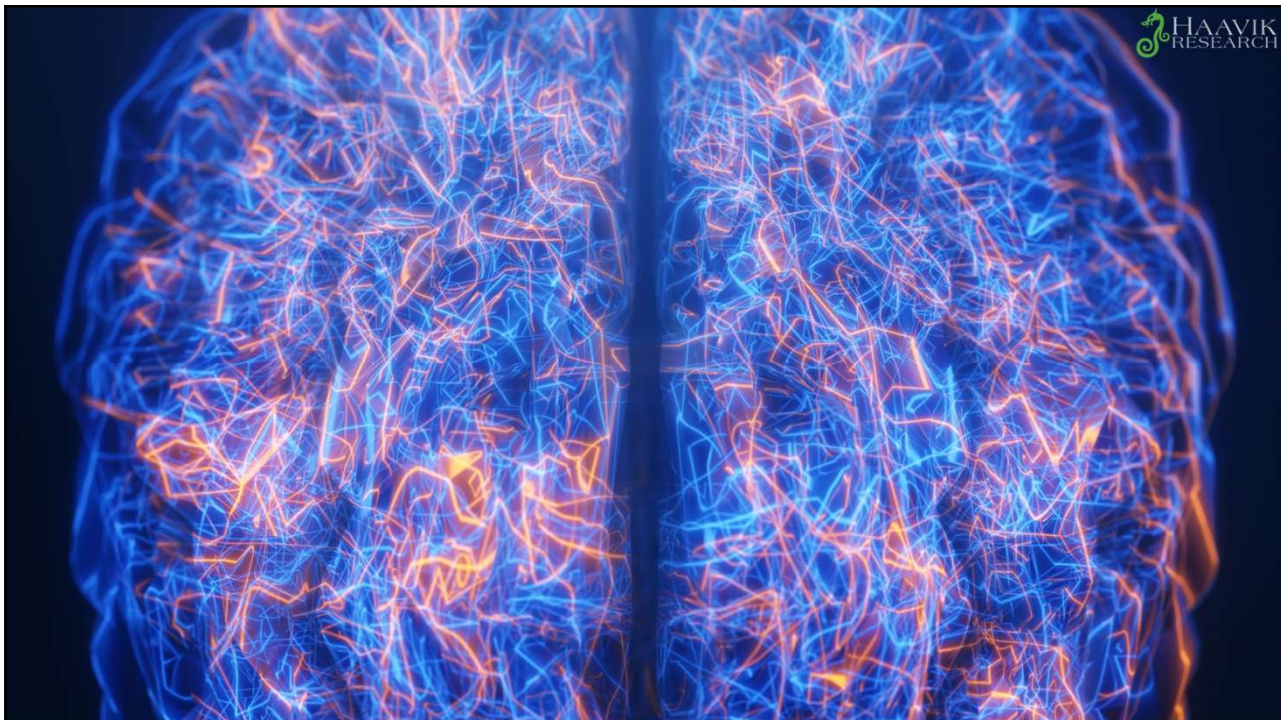


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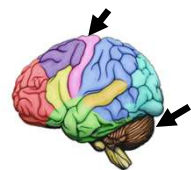
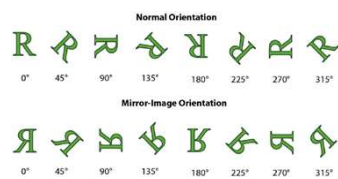
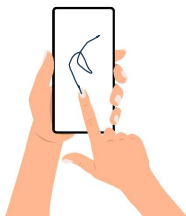
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## Spinal dysfunction vs Healthy people

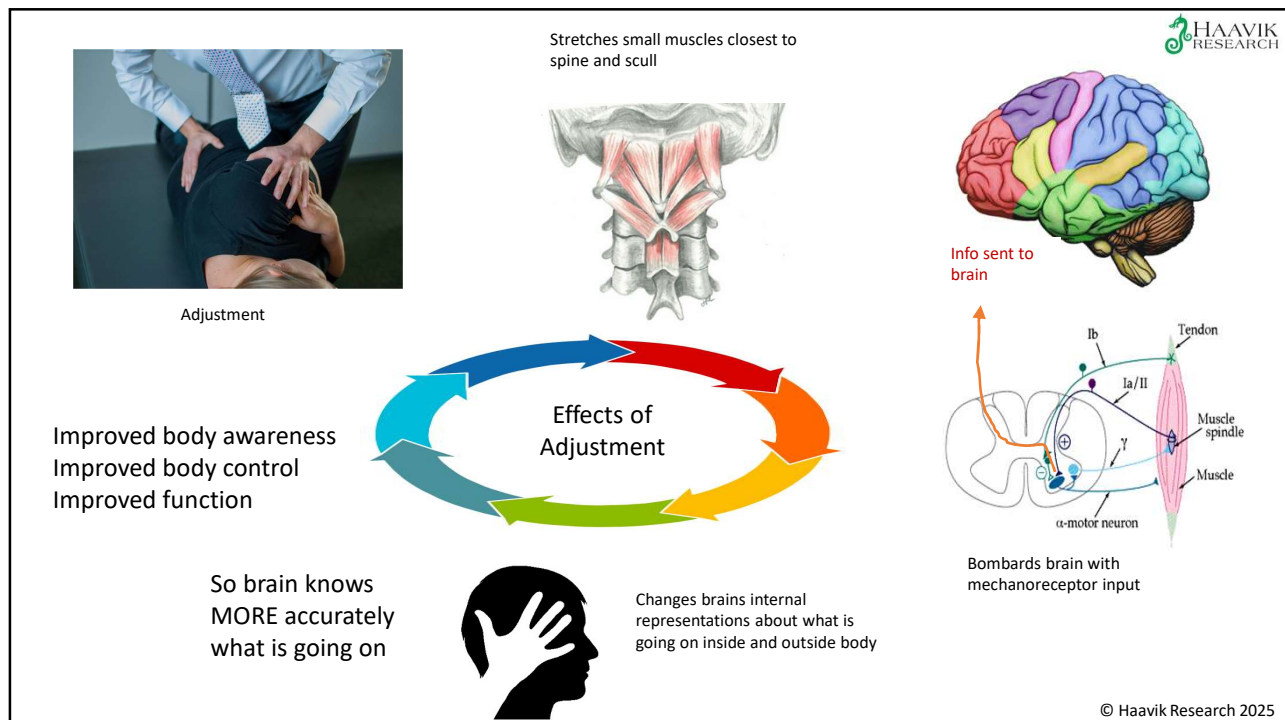


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This tells me that for some people, being subluxations, has resulted in their brain....

- Not controlling their neck muscle function in an ideal way
- Not controlling arm muscles in an ideal way
- Altering body posture
- Reducing the accuracy with which the brain interprets sound and visual information
- Changing communication between different parts of the brain
- Making the brain less accurately aware of what is occurring in the arm
- Reducing the brains ability to accurately mentally rotate items

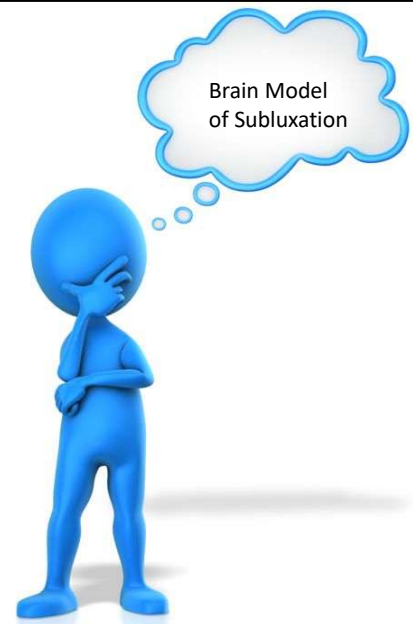
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## Implications

- The brain model is FAR MORE impactful that the structural pathology MOPI model ever could be
- Because EVERY adjustment impacts the BRAIN!!! (Prefrontal cortex and Cerebellum)



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How do you incorporate this new science into practice?

NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC

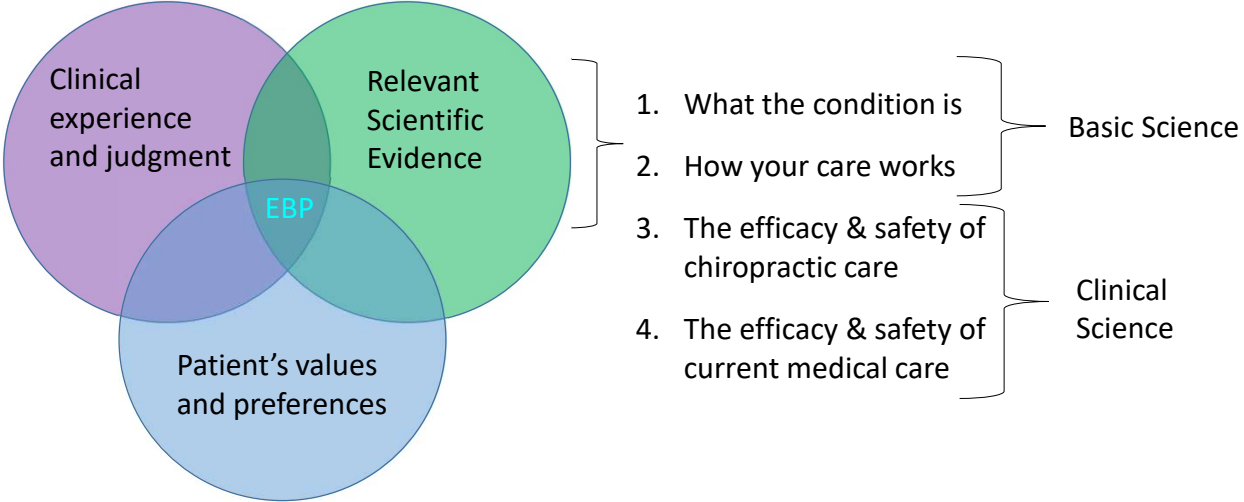
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## Patient-Focused, Evidence-Based Practice

Dr David Sackett - The father of evidence-based medicine



1. What the condition is
2. How your care works
3. The efficacy & safety of chiropractic care
4. The efficacy & safety of current medical care

Basic Science

Clinical Science

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## Basic Science

- Mechanisms
- How something works
- What something is
- What happens in the brain after an adjustment

vs

## Clinical Science

- What effect an intervention has on a health outcome
- What health benefits there are from an intervention
- How safe is an intervention

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DO YOU OWN  
YOUR SCIENCE?

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## Basic Science

**LEVEL 1**

For junior chiropractic students or chiropractic assistants who have not yet gained any in-depth knowledge about anatomy, physiology, or pathology.

Learn the facts about why good spinal function is so important, what happens when we adjust the spine, the detrimental impacts of stress and trauma, the important role of brain mal-adaptations in chronic pain, and how chiropractic care can improve strength and alter the prefrontal cortex and cerebellum function.

**BS1.01 The Many Models of the...**

64 Minutes - An introduction into chiropractic neuroscience and the...

Dr Heidi Haavik

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

**BS1.02 The Brain Model of the...**

75 Minutes - How a healthy and a dysfunctional spine communicates...

Dr Heidi Haavik

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

**BS1.03 Your first visit to a Chiropractor**

45 Minutes - What to expect from your first visit and 'what is that'...

Dr Jenna Duehr

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

**BS1.04 Your first adjustment**

42 Minutes - What is an adjustment, how does it work and what to expect...

Dr Jenna Duehr

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

**BS1.08 Adjustments Improve Strength**

46 Minutes - The effect of chiropractic on muscle strength and the latest...

Dr Jenna Duehr

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

**BS1.09 The Prefrontal Cortex and...**

66 Minutes - Chiropractic studies have shown adjustments can change...

Dr Alice Cade

0% Complete  
0/0 Steps

See more...

\$24.00

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**2**

Click on the up arrow

**3**

Click on 'Add to Home Screen'

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## ARE YOU A CONFIDANT COMMUNICATOR?



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## Confidence and Clarity

Being able to confidently and clearly articulating a value proposition of chiropractic care impacts:

- Customer engagement
- New patients signing up
- Increased credibility and trust
- Business growth
- Competitive differentiation

Equals a major difference to the success of a small (or big) private practice



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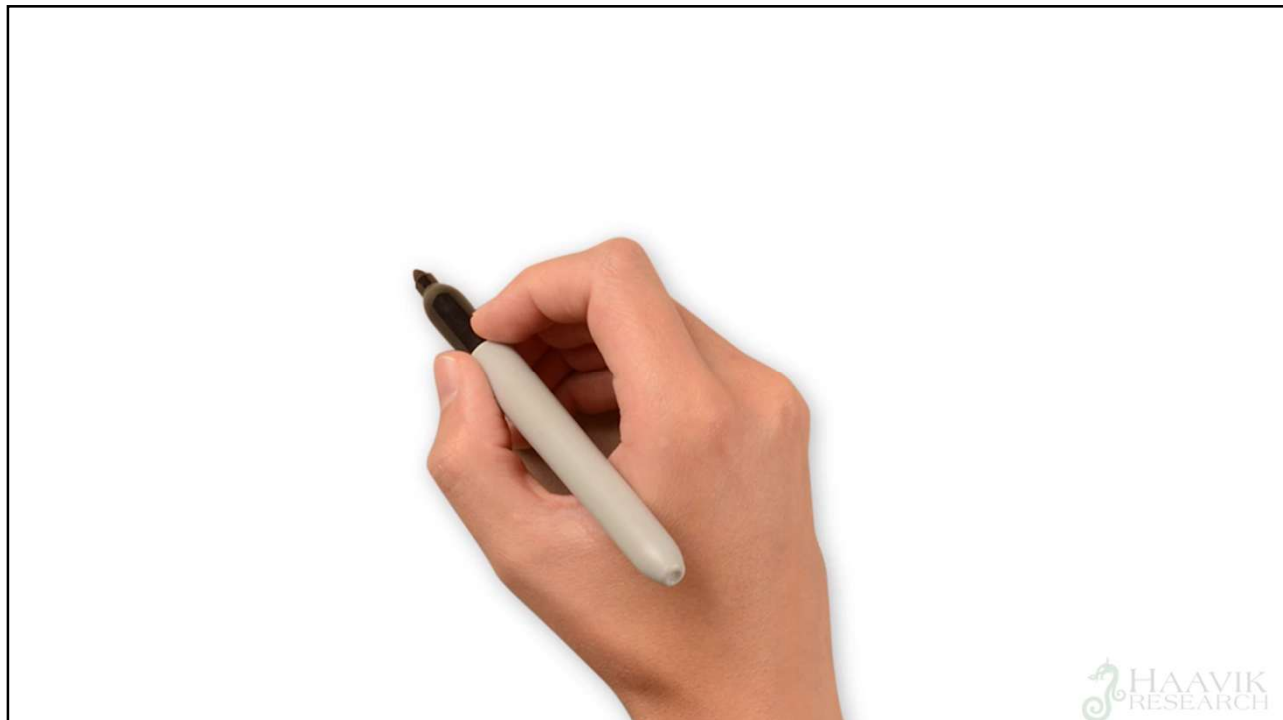
✓ Over 70 online classes about the science of chiropractic for you!



✓ Online classes for your chiropractic assistants!



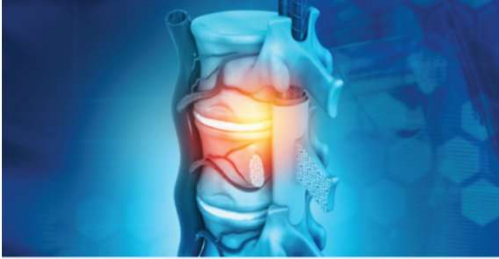
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### Effects of an Adjustment




**Did you know that Chiropractors adjust dysfunctional segments in your spine called subluxations?**

Recent scientific studies are revealing a new understanding about how chiropractic spinal adjustments work. We know much more about how the brain and the rest of the central nervous system functions.




**What is a subluxation?**  
Originally, many people thought that dysfunctional 'subluxated' spinal segments were 'out of place, or misaligned, and that this put pressure on the nerves exiting the spine. We now know that a vertebral subluxation is not so much the condition of a bone being out of place; it is more that a bone is functioning or moving in a less than ideal way – in a manner that is not 'normal' for the body.

### Keep your Spine Moving



**Did you know that even the ancient Greeks knew that movement and physical exercise was good for your brain?**

Modern scientists have shown that movement is one of the keys to promoting a healthy brain.<sup>1</sup> Movement has been shown to help people with dementia, depression, and ADHD.<sup>2</sup>




**Why is spinal movement important?**  
Scientists now know that it's not just physical exercise that's important for your brain, but how your spine moves is also very important for keeping your brain healthy. It's even been shown to change the structure of your brain and improve your concentration and how fast you can think and react.<sup>1,2</sup>


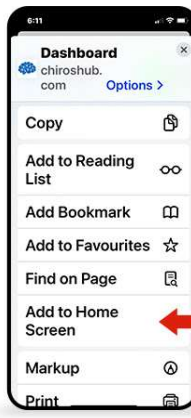
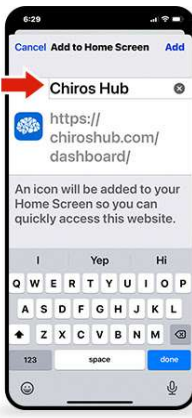

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ALL ONLINE

- 20 Steps for chiros
  - <https://chirosacademy.com/the-new-brain-model-2024/>
- 13 Steps for CAs
  - <https://chiroslearninghub.com/enlighten-practice-members-2024/>

Plus LIVE DC workshops roughly every second months

- covers live Q&A plus a topic

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## Some changes in the brain take longer



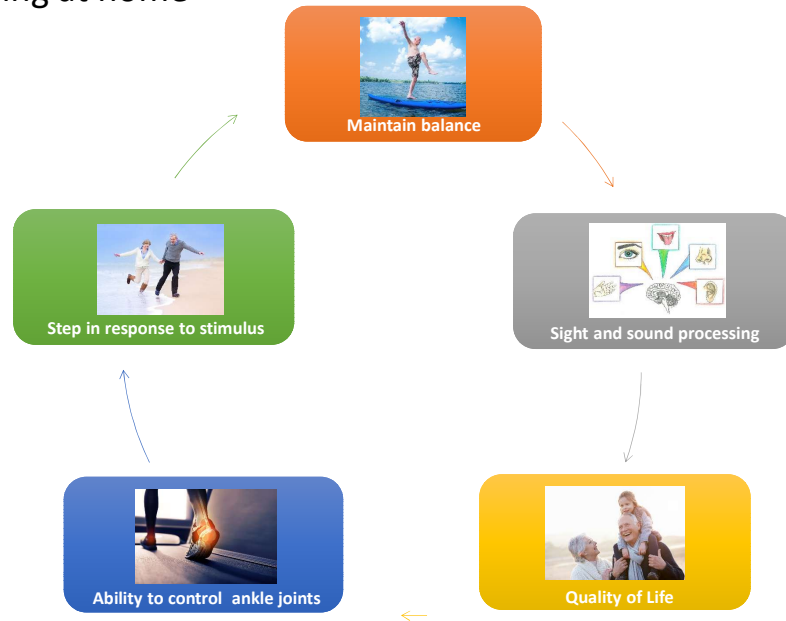
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Holt, K., Haavik, H., Lee, A.C.L., Murphy, B., & Raina Elley, R. (2015) Effectiveness of chiropractic care to improve sensorimotor function associated with falls risk in older people: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*. May;39(4):267-78. doi: 10.1016/j.jmpt.2016.02.003.

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60 older adults living at home

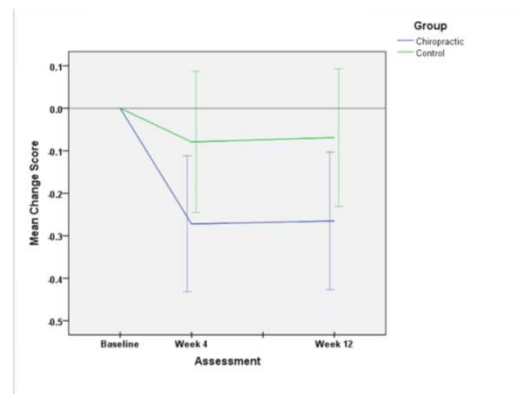
We recorded at:  
Baseline  
After 4 weeks  
After 12 weeks



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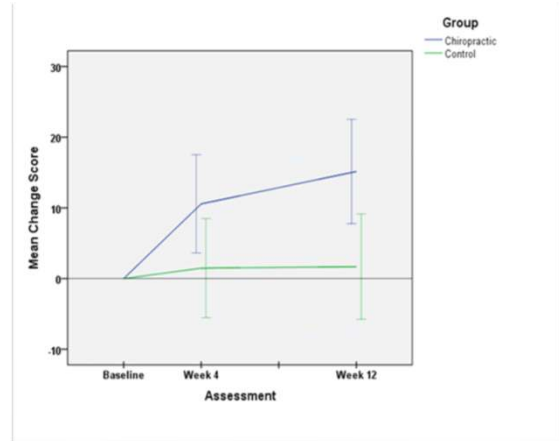
## Improved ankle joint position sense



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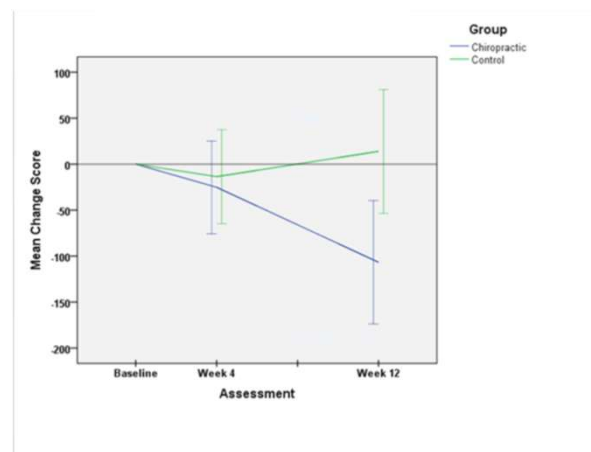
## Improved interpretation of sound and visual information at the same time



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## Improved stepping times



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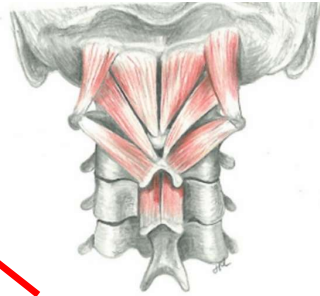




## Why might some changes take time?

Subluxated segment deep paraspinal muscles over time become:

- Stiff and Fibrotic
- Atrophied (shrunk)
- Fatty infiltration
- Change fibre type
- Degeneration around joint
- Stretch receptors dysfunction



Deep paraspinal muscles around a 'healthy' segment are:

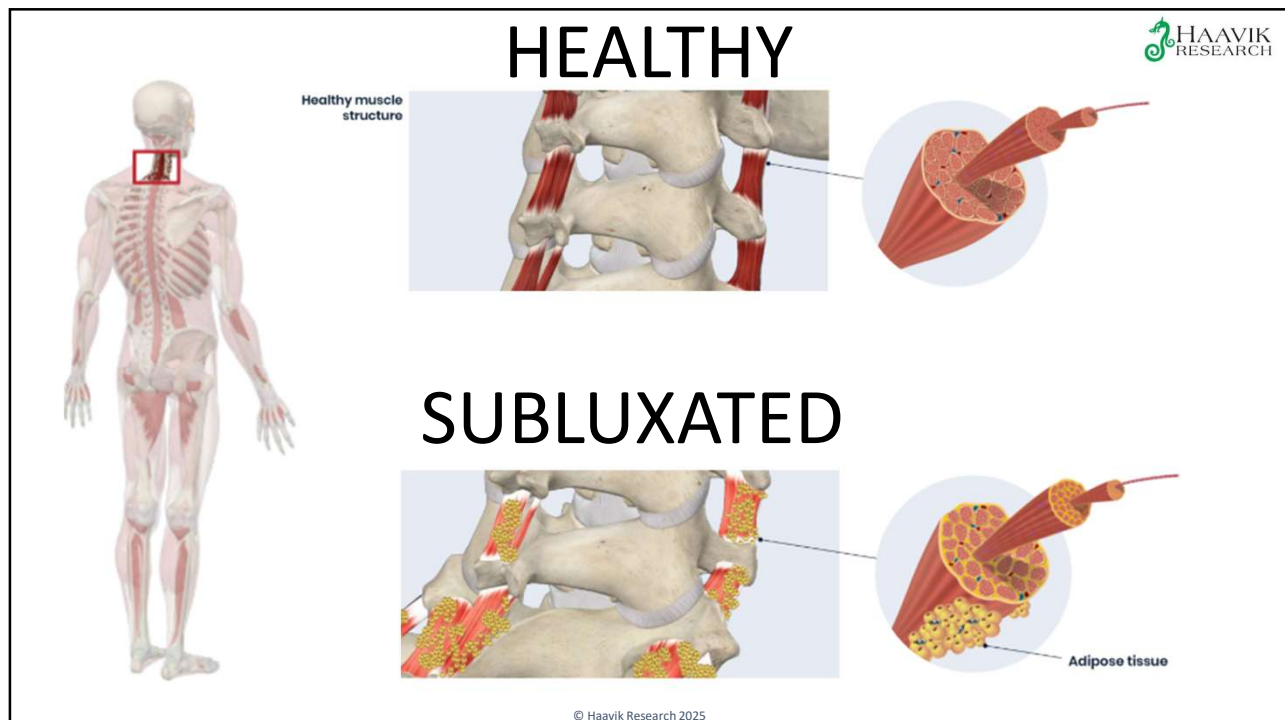
- Plump
- Larger in size
- Slow-twitch fibre type
- No fatty infiltration
- Move freely
- Healthy stretch receptors

**From this to this!**

Probably because we need to exercise these muscles back into proper function!

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## Implications for question answers

- Chiropractors' role is to exercise the spine back into proper function



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& Gifts**

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What does the evidence say about frequency of care?



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## Dose-Response Low Back Pain (LBP) Study

- 1,2,3, or 4 chiropractic visits per week for three weeks
- 72 patients with chronic LBP
- HVLA spinal manipulation + some other physical modalities
- Relief was substantial for patients receiving care 3 to 4 times per week for three weeks

(Haas et al 2004)

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## Follow Up Larger Study

400 patients with  
chronic low back  
pain

0,6,12, or 18  
sessions of SM  
over 6 weeks

Pain scores better  
in groups getting  
adjusted

At 12 weeks- 2x  
per week had best  
results

At 52 weeks- 3x  
week had best  
results

Only modest  
differences so not  
conclusive results



(Haas et al 2014)

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## Dose Response for Cervicogenic Headaches

24 patients with cervicogenic  
headaches

1,3, or 4 chiropractic visits per week  
for three weeks

3 or 4 times per week showed  
substantial benefits at twelve weeks  
compared to once per week



(Haas et al 2004; 2010)

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## Follow Up Larger Study

- 80 patients with cervicogenic headaches.
- 1 or 2 visits per week for eight weeks.
- Control group receiving light massage 1 or 2x per week.
- Outcomes assessed - pain scales, frequency of headaches, medication use.
- Followed over twenty-four weeks.
- Results:
  - Significant improvement in pain and disability scores in chiropractic group.
  - Fewer headaches at twelve weeks in chiropractic group.
  - Less medication use at twenty-four weeks in chiropractic group.
  - Frequency of care not significantly different but in general more frequent had better outcomes.

(Haas et al 2010)

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## Chronic Cervicogenic Headaches

- 256 participants.
- 1, 2, or 3 chiropractic visits per week for six weeks.
- Control group receiving light massage.
- Main outcome assessed of number of headache days at twelve and twenty-four weeks.
- Results:
  - The more adjustment visits, the fewer headache days.



(Haas et al 2018)

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## Nordic Maintenance Care Program

- Several research groups working together to conduct several studies looking at maintenance care and its benefits in Nordic countries.

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(Eklund et al 2018)

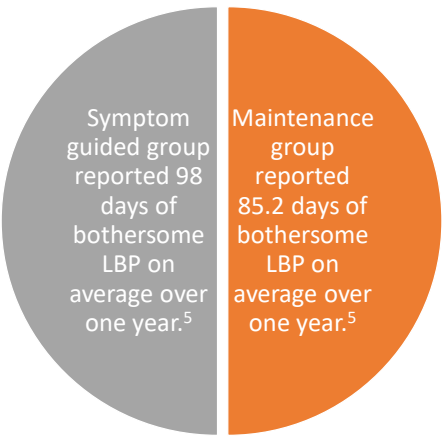
81



## What They Did:

- 328 patients with non-specific LBP from 40 Swedish chiropractic clinics.<sup>5</sup>
- Good responses to care.<sup>5</sup>
- Received chiropractic maintenance care for the next year, or symptom-guided care.<sup>5</sup>
- Outcomes: number of days with bothersome back pain over one year.<sup>5</sup>

## Results:



Group	Days of bothersome LBP (average over one year)
Symptom guided group	98
Maintenance group	85.2

(Eklund et al 2018)

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## Take-home Message About Maintenance Care

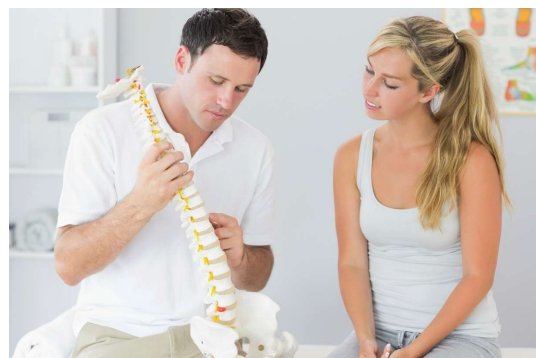
*“For patients with recurrent low back pain who respond well to chiropractic care, they should consider getting checked regularly by their chiropractor even if their pain doesn’t come back because it may help them to have fewer days where their backpain interferes with their lives.”*

(Eklund et al 2018)

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## Summary of Frequency of Care



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## Implications for question answers

- Chiropractors' role is to exercise the spine back into proper function
- Science shows it's better for you to see me more often early on in care, and this even gives you long term benefits (CGHAs and LBP)
- Science shows maintenance care gives you less days of pain compared to coming back only when it hurts



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### How often should you visit a Chiropractor?



**When you first see your chiropractor, you will probably ask "how often do I need to come?"**

Often the answer people want to hear is 'once' but chiropractic care, like most things that are really good for us, rarely makes a long-term difference to your health and wellness after just one visit.



#### The 1,000<sup>th</sup> straw that breaks the camel's back

A problem can build up day after day as you sit hunched over your desk, or bend and twist as you lift, or tense up as you deal with your daily stress, and then one day, you bend to tie your shoelaces and all of a sudden something hurts! You can rest assured that tying your shoelaces isn't what caused the problem - it's simply the thousandth straw that broke the camel's back (or was too much for your back) and that's why you're in pain.

### Maintenance Care



**Did you know that 50% of patients visit a chiropractor simply to maintain their health and well-being!**

Lato - Light Aenean ac tincidunt lectus, eu facilisis leo. Donec sodales libero sit amet lacus ornare feugiat. Nulla gravida a lectus vitae efficitur.



#### What is maintenance care?

Maintenance care is when patients go to a chiropractor even when they are not in pain or discomfort. The idea with maintenance care is that regular adjustments will help maintain your spine and nervous system function at its optimal level and help you to be your best and to prevent new episodes of pain developing.<sup>2</sup>

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# The power of a single adjustment session



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## Strength Changes with chiropractic adjustments

Exp Brain Res  
DOI 10.1007/s00221-014-4193-5

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### Changes in H-reflex and V-waves following spinal manipulation

Imran Khan Niazi · Kemal S. Türker · Stanley Flavel ·  
Mat Kinget · Jens Duehr · Heidi Haavik

Received: 14 May 2014 / Accepted: 22 December 2014  
© Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

**Abstract** This study investigates whether spinal manipulation leads to neural plastic changes involving cortical drive and the H-reflex pathway. Soleus evoked V-wave, H-reflex, and M-wave recruitment curves and maximum voluntary contraction (MVC) in surface electromyography

in afferents. Spinal manipulation appears to prevent fatigue developed during maximal contractions. Spinal manipulation appears to alter the net excitability of the low-threshold motor units, increase cortical drive, and prevent fatigue.



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Niazi et al 2015 Exp Brain Res

90



16% increase in strength  
No change H-reflex  
Large increase in V wave

Niazi et al 2015. Exp Brain Res



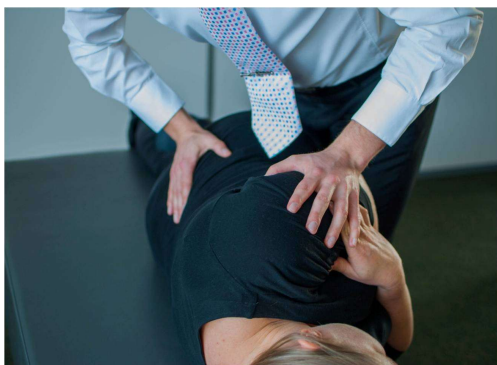
6% increase in strength  
No change H-reflex  
Large increase in V wave

Christiansen et al 2018 *European Journal of Applied Physiology*

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## One adjustment vs 3 weeks of strength training



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Niazi I, Türker K, Flavel S, Kinget M, Duehr J, Haavik H. Changes in H-reflex and V waves following spinal manipulation. *Exp Brain Res.* 2015;233:1165-73. Vila-Chã C, Falla D, Correia MV, Farina D. Changes in H reflex and V wave following short-term endurance and strength training. *Journal of Applied Physiology.* 2012;112(1):54-63.

92

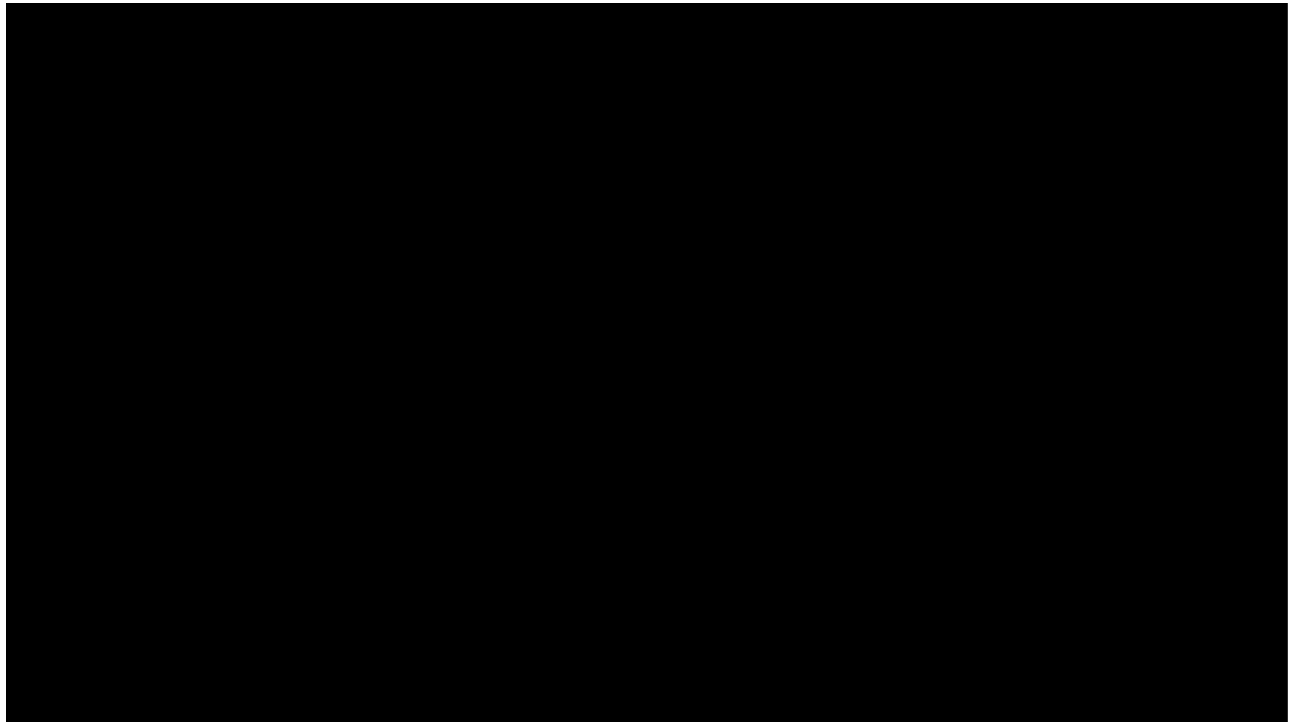


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## First Chronic Stroke Study



65% increase in strength  
No change H-reflex  
Large increase in V wave

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Holt et al 2019 Scientific Reports

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Where in the brain do we find  
changes after chiropractic care?

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## 64 channel EEG and source localisation

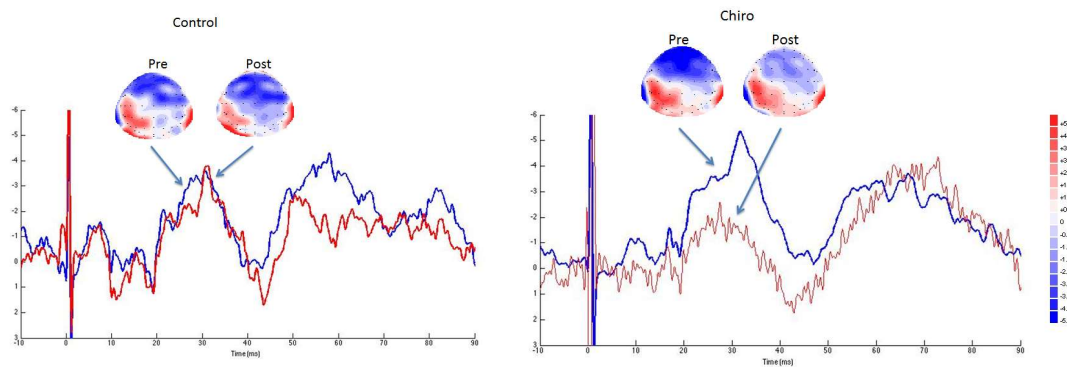


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Lelic, D., Niazi, I.K., Holt, K., Jochumsen, M., Dremstrup, K., Yelder, P., Murphy, B., Drewes, A. M., & Haavik, H. (2016). Manipulation of dysfunctional spinal joints affects sensorimotor integration in the prefrontal cortex: A brain source localization study. *Neural Plasticity*, 1.doi:10.1155/2016/3704964.

99

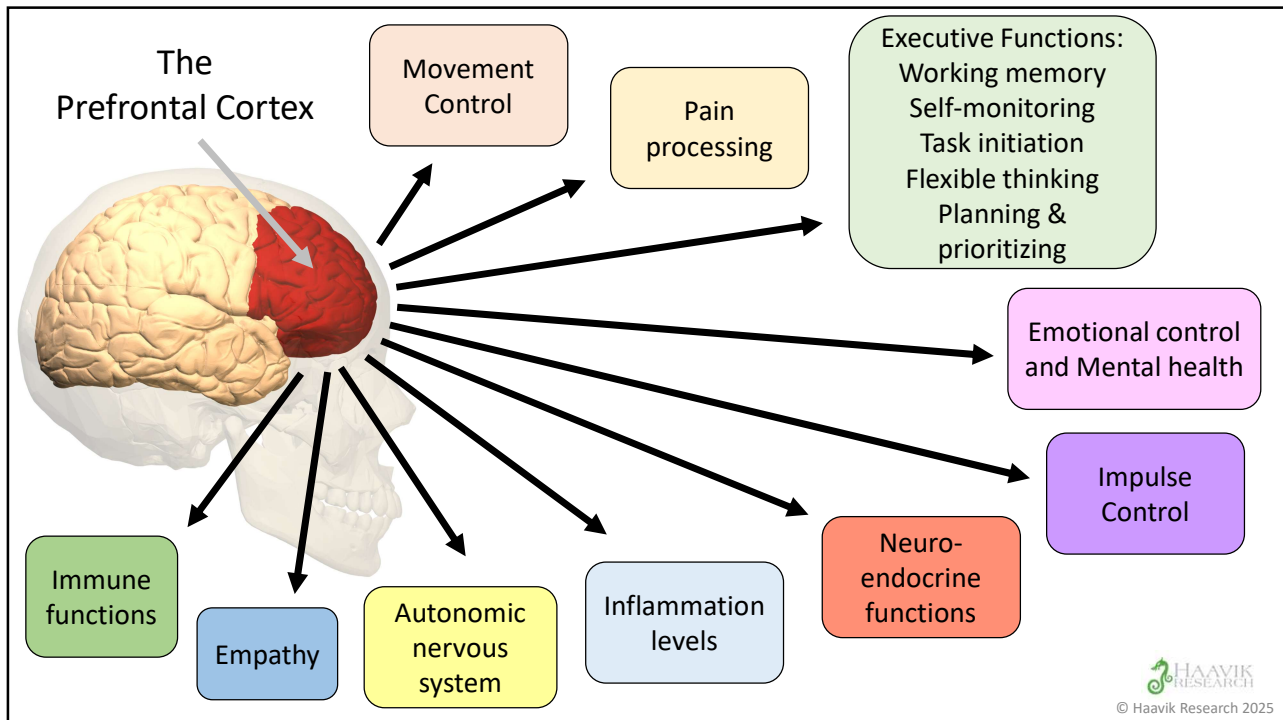
## N30 brain processing changes were occurring in the Pre-Frontal Cortex



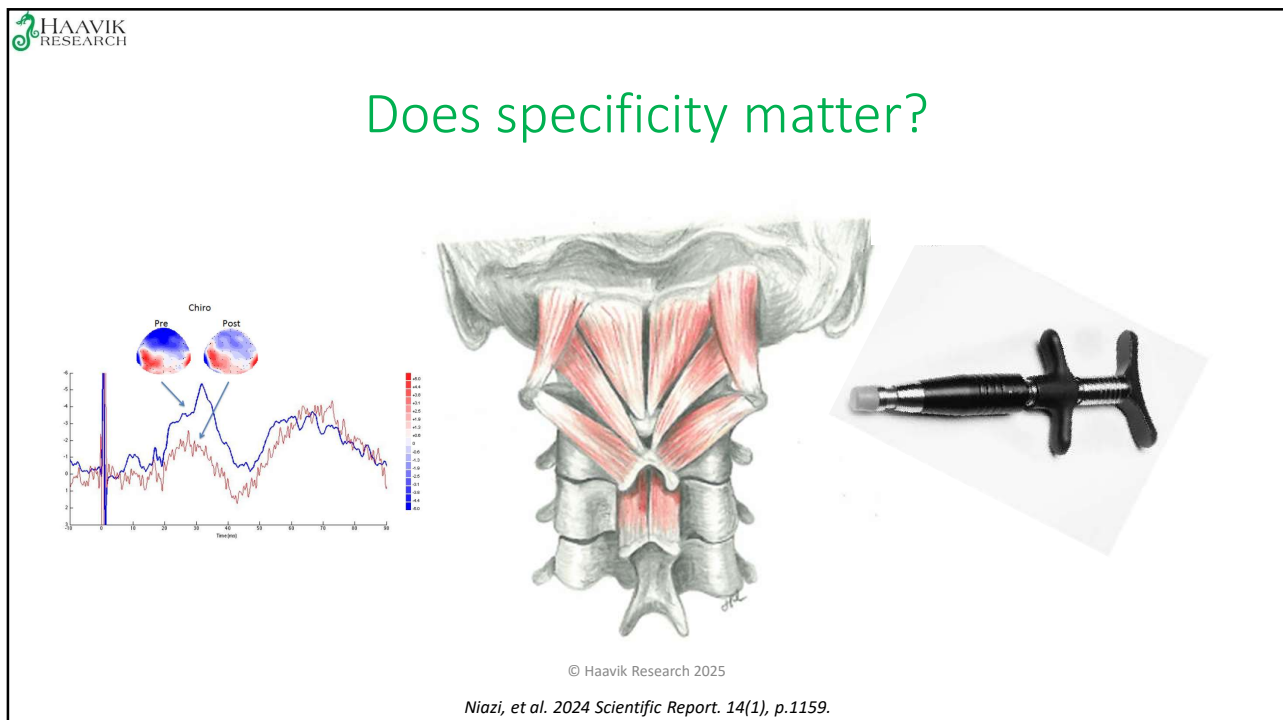
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Lelic, D., Niazi, I.K., Holt, K., Jochumsen, M., Dremstrup, K., Yelder, P., Murphy, B., Drewes, A. M., & Haavik, H. (2016). Manipulation of dysfunctional spinal joints affects sensorimotor integration in the prefrontal cortex: A brain source localization study. *Neural Plasticity*, 1.doi:10.1155/2016/3704964.

100

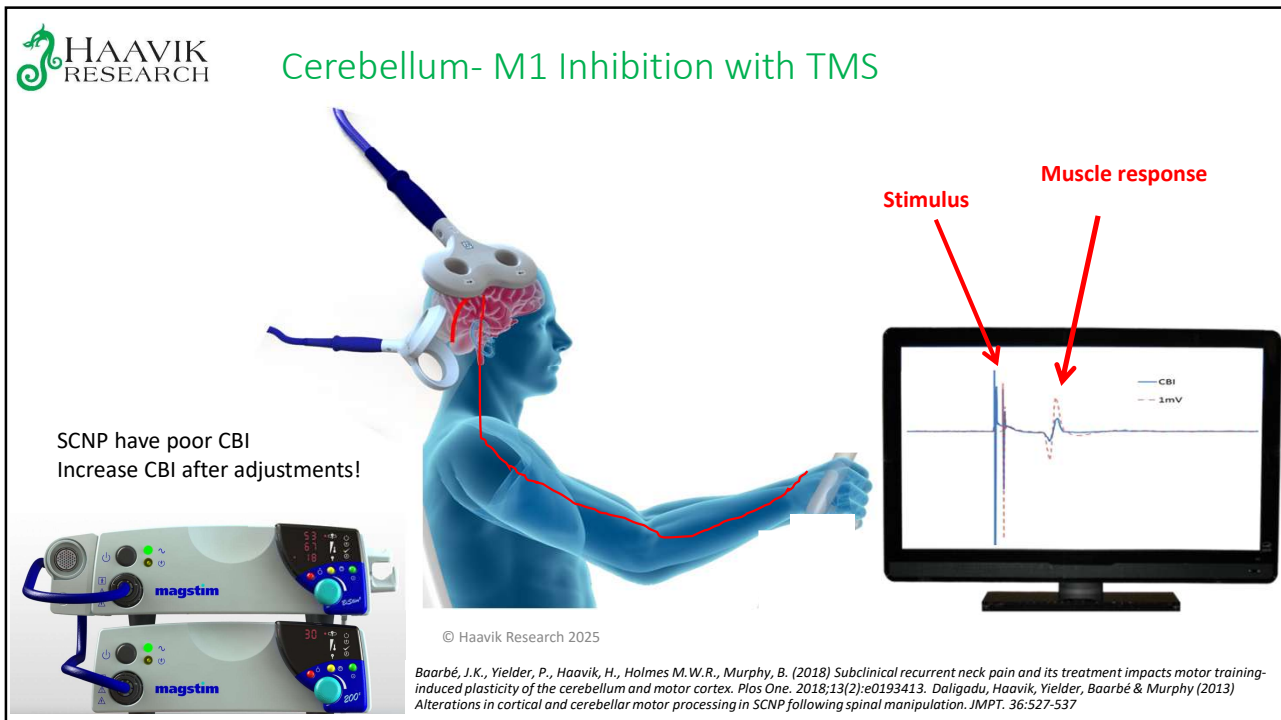


101

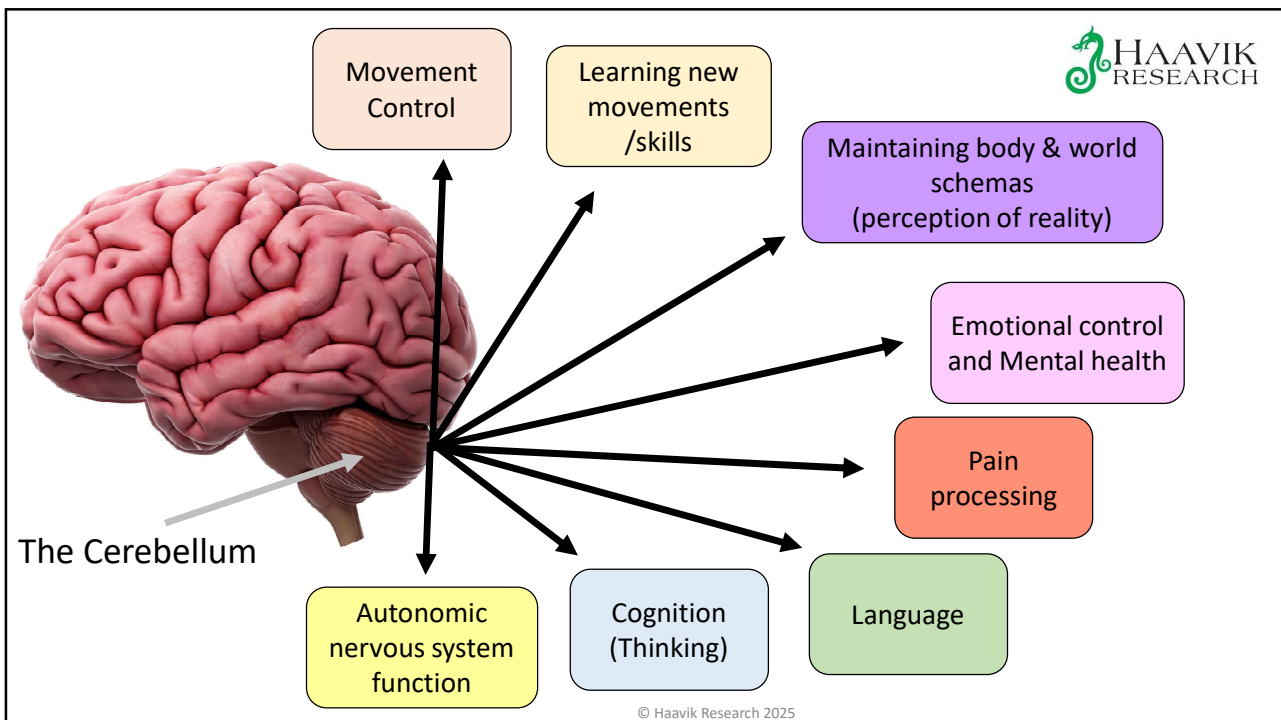


102





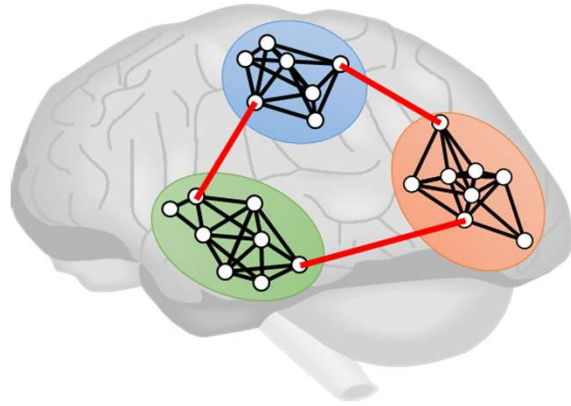
103



104

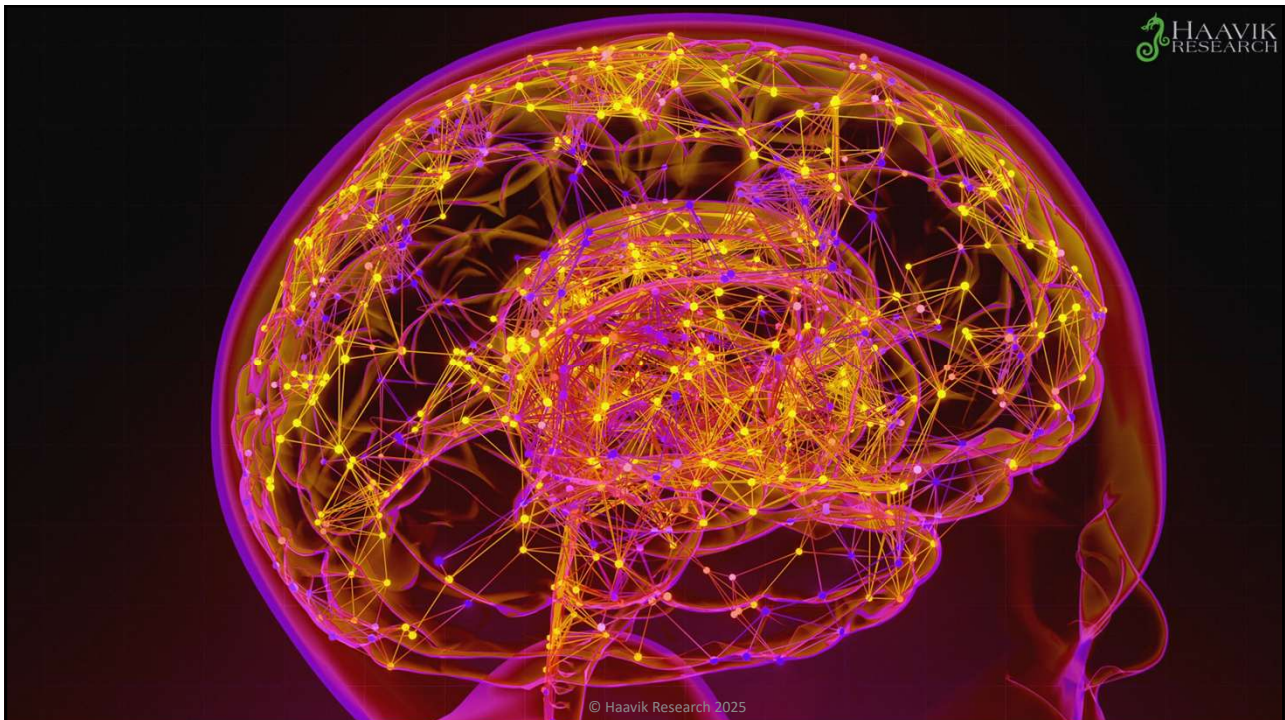
## Biological Networks in the Brain (and Hubs)

- A biological neural network in the brain is a complex network of neurons that are chemically connected by synapses.
- Neurons send and receive electrochemical signals to each other, and the brain uses these signals to process information.



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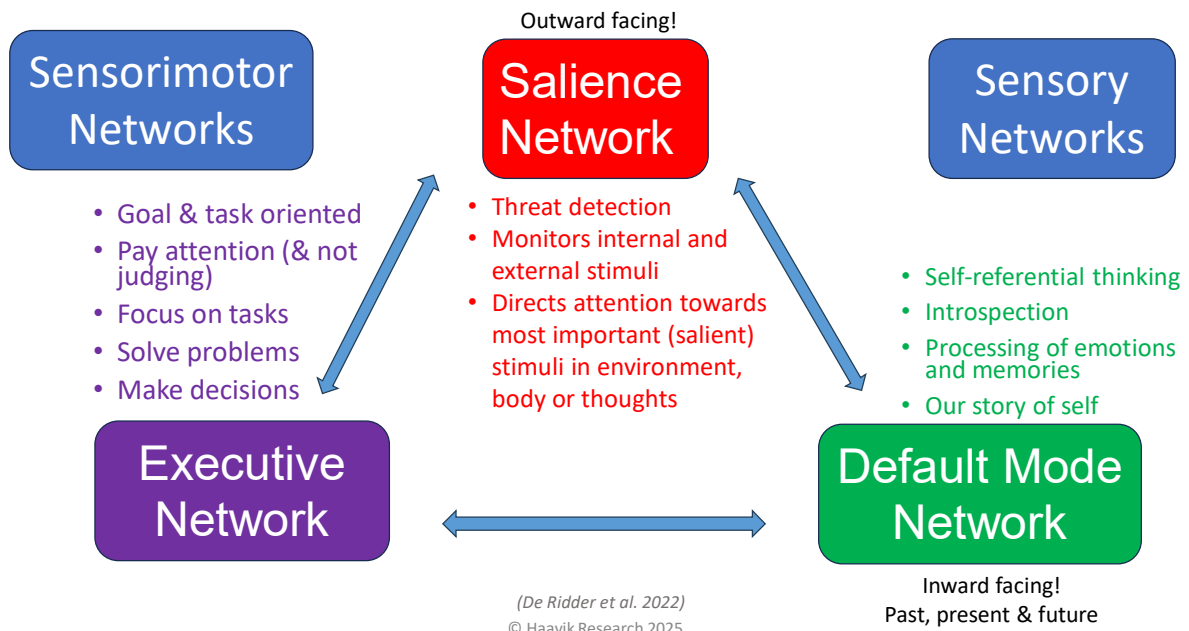
105



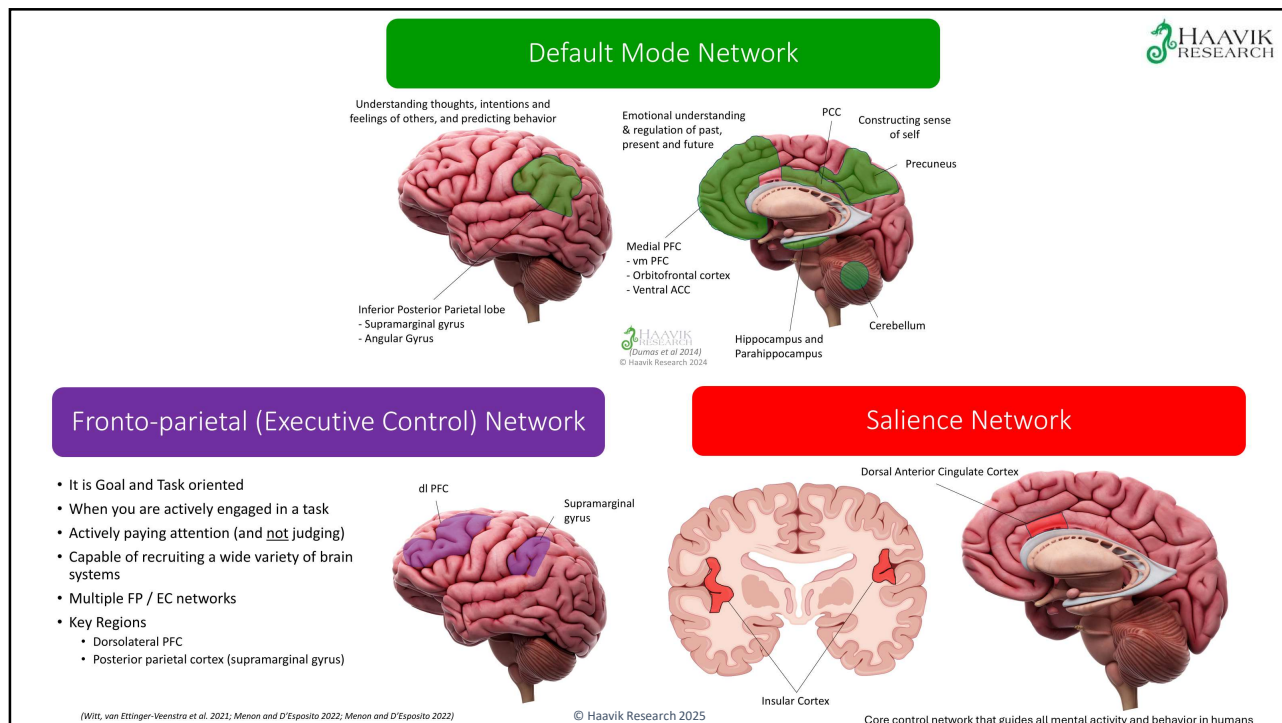
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# Triple Brain Network & Consciousness



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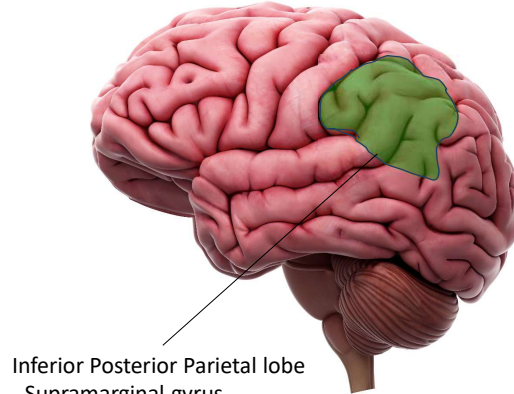


108



## Default Mode Network

Understanding thoughts, intentions and feelings of others, and predicting behavior

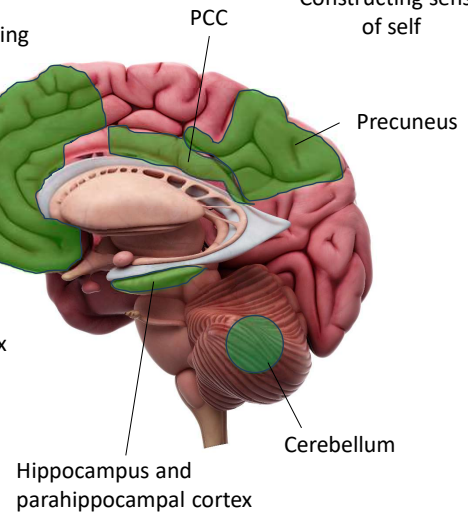


Emotional understanding & regulation of past, present and future

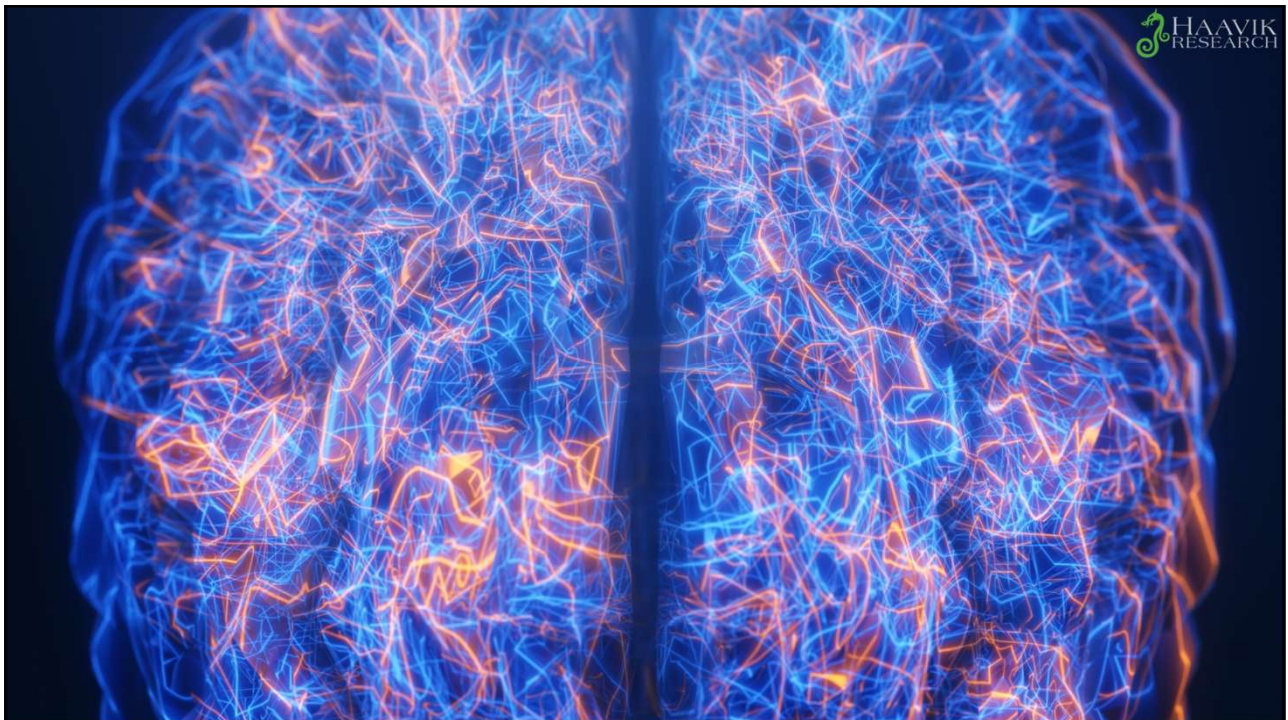
Medial PFC  
- vm PFC  
- Orbitofrontal cortex  
- Ventral ACC

**HAAVIK RESEARCH**  
(Dumas et al 2014)  
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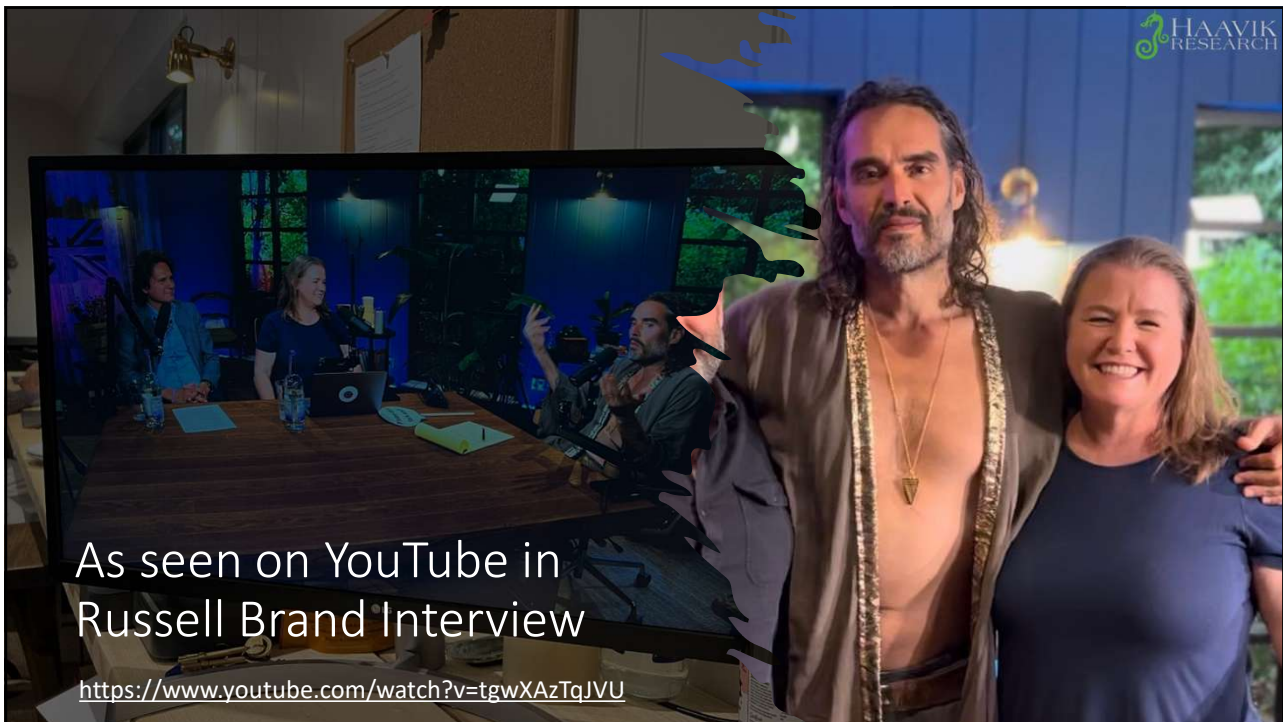
Constructing sense of self



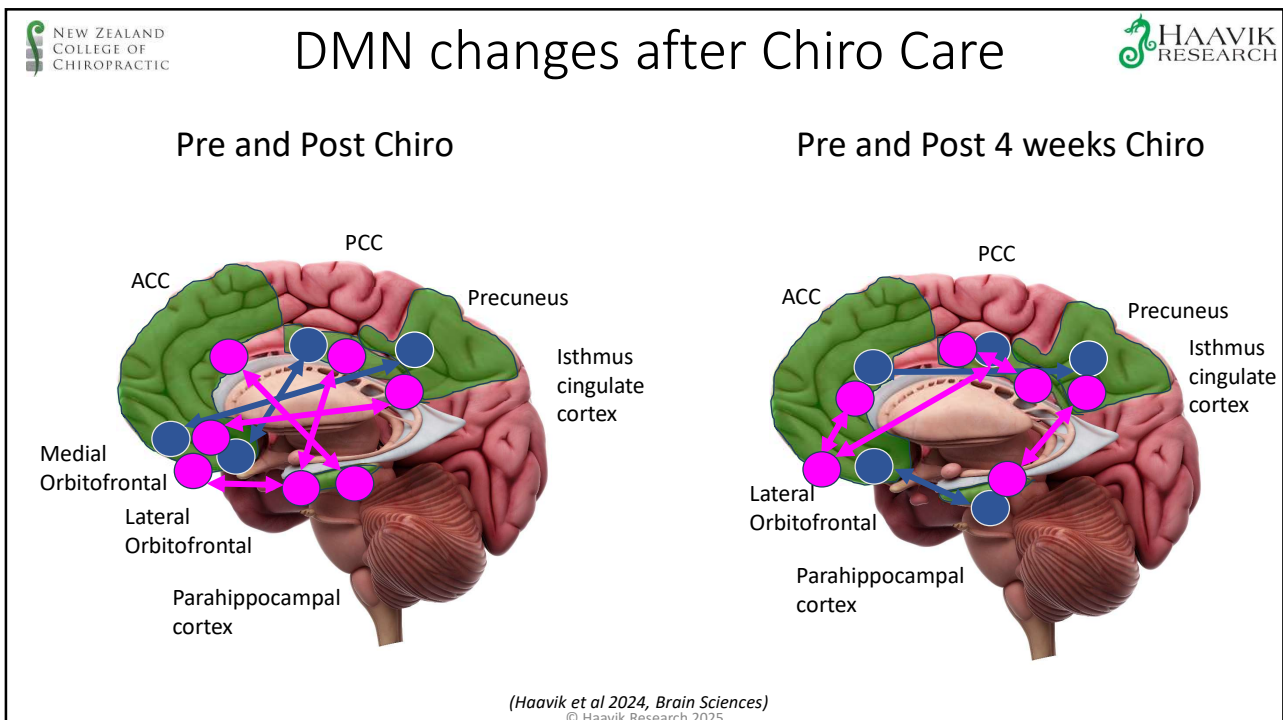
109



110



111



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## Questionnaire Results

### Control Group

NO significant changes at all

### Chiropractic Group

- Improved QOL overall
- Improved Physical function
- Less Depression
- Less anxiety
- Less Fatigue
- Less pain interference
- Less pain intensity



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Unmedicated depressed people have significantly increased functional connectivity between the **Precuneus** and the **prefrontal cortex**

Increased functional connectivity of the **posterior cingulate cortex** with the **lateral orbitofrontal cortex** in depression (Cheng, Rolls et al. 2018B)



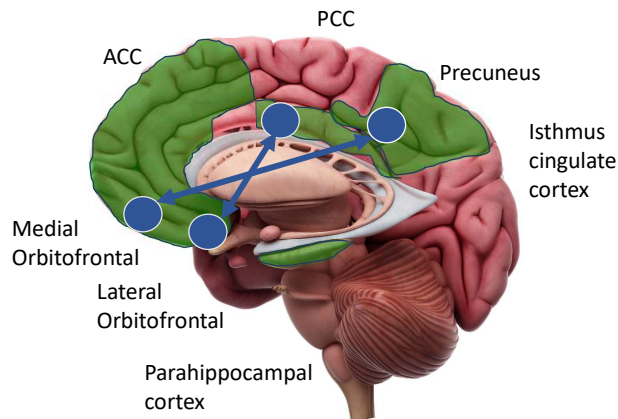
The increased connectivity of the precuneus and/or PCC with the prefrontal cortex short-term memory system may contribute to the rumination about low self-esteem in depression.

(Cheng, et al 2018A; Cheng, Rolls et al. 2018B)

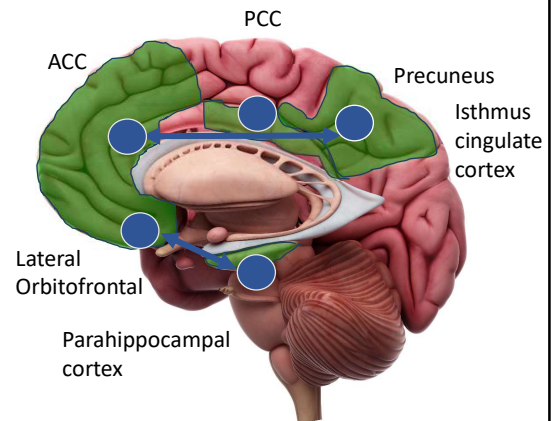
114

## DMN changes after Chiro Care

### Pre and Post Chiro



### Pre and Post 4 weeks Chiro

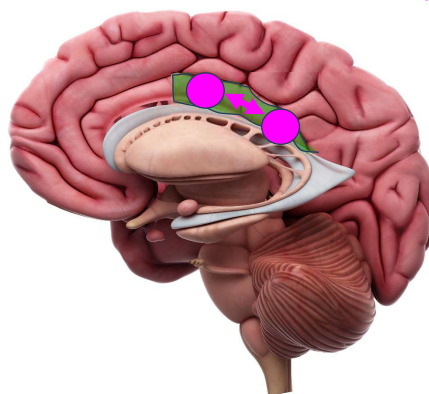


(Haavik et al 2024, Brain Sciences)

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## In depression there is asymmetry in the thickness of Posterior Cingulate Cortex

- PCC deals with internally focused, self-referential processing
- I.e. Construction of the narrative sense of self, including autobiographical memories
- Implicated in depression:  $\uparrow$  cortical thickness in left vs right PCC
- Depressed individuals with higher somatic symptoms (e.g. sleep disturbance, appetite disturbance, and fatigue or loss of energy) have greater asymmetry in PCC thickness



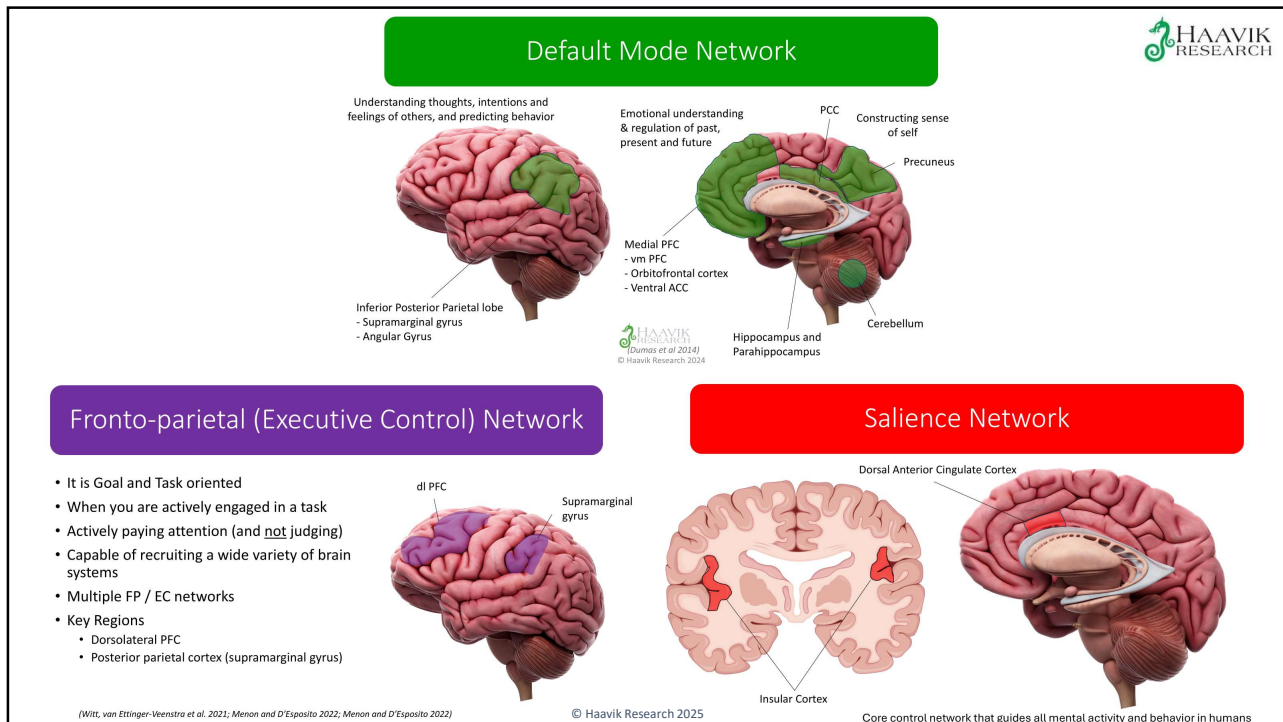
SEPs Alpha  $\uparrow$  L isthmus-cingulate- R PCC

Thus, this change may reflect altered narrative sense of self in a manner that is reducing symptoms of depression and improvements in fatigue

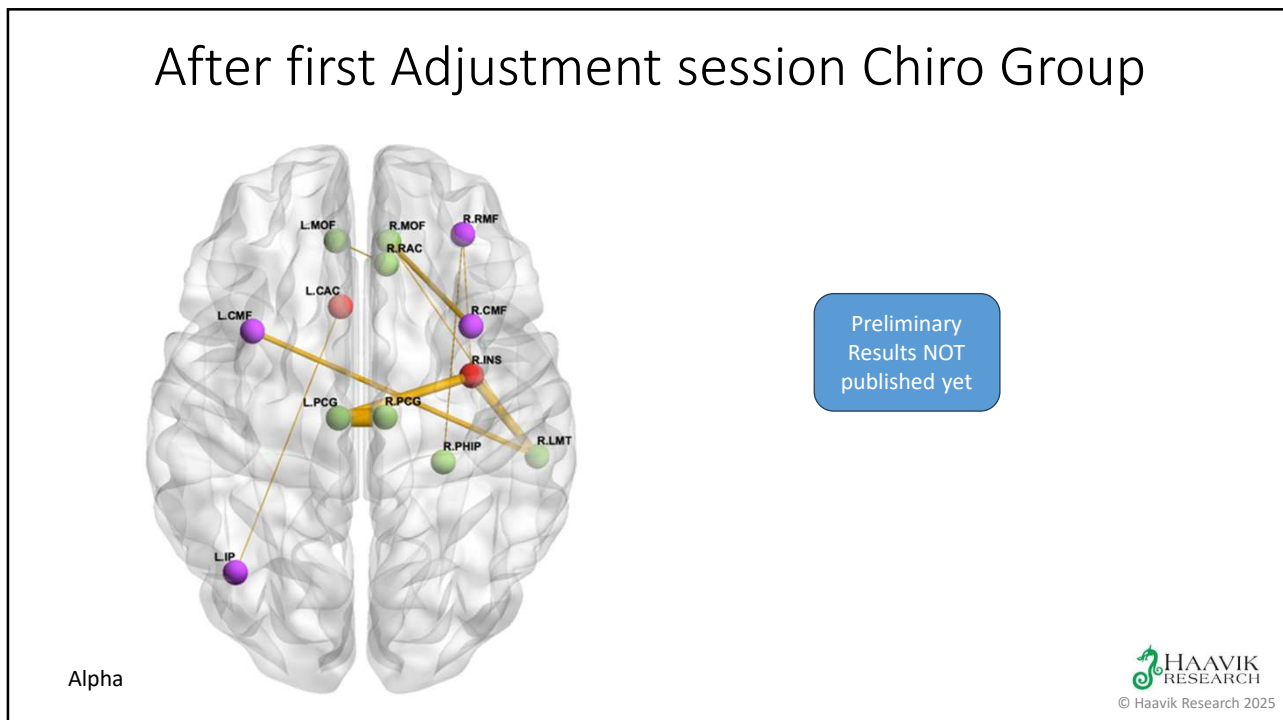
(Haavik et al 2024, Brain Sciences)

(Dotson et al. 2021; van Eijndhoven et al. 2013)

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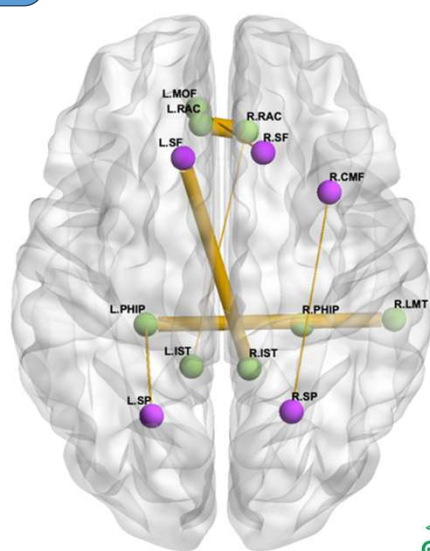
117



118

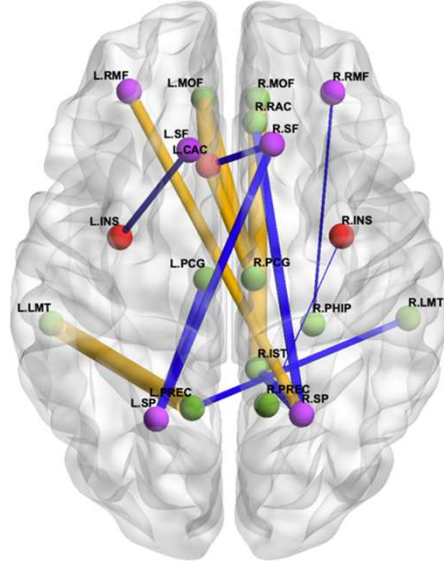
Preliminary  
Results NOT  
published yet

## After 4 weeks Chiro Group Brain changes



Alpha

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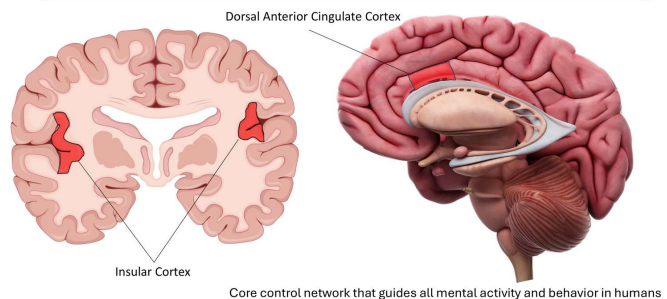


Beta

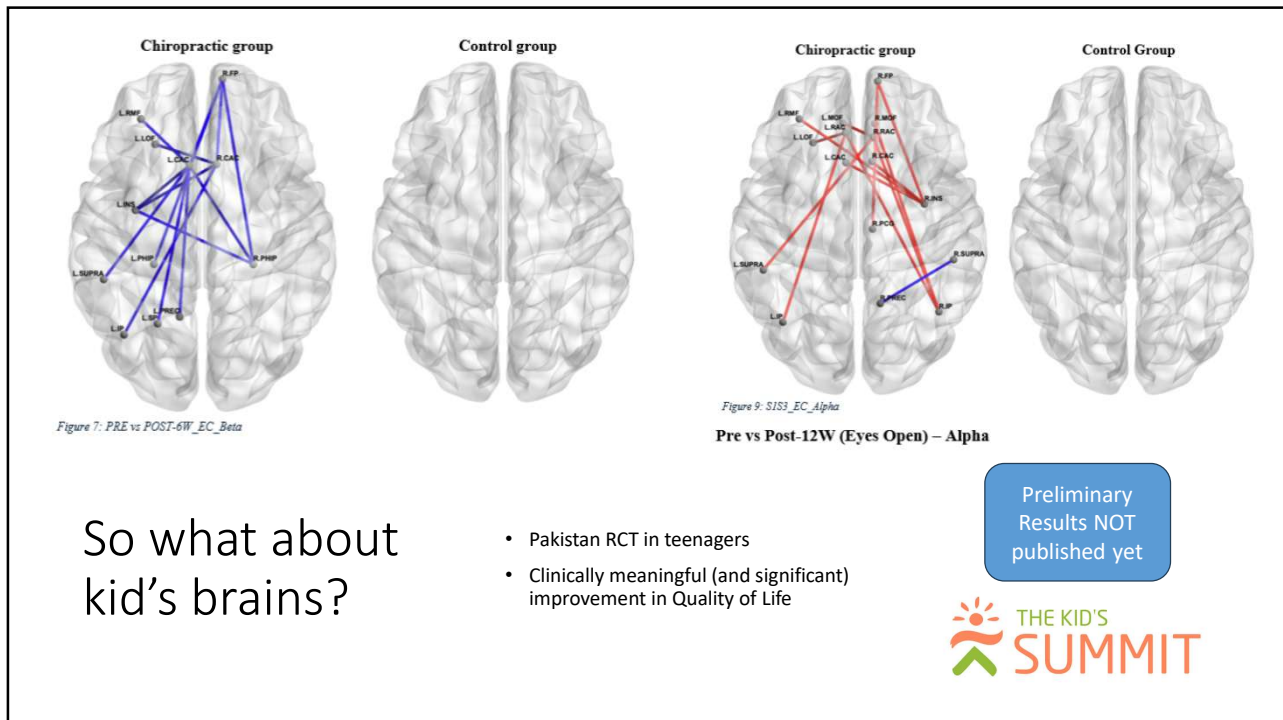
119

Saliience Network  
Activation is likely  
where the brain  
recalibrates after  
an adjustment!

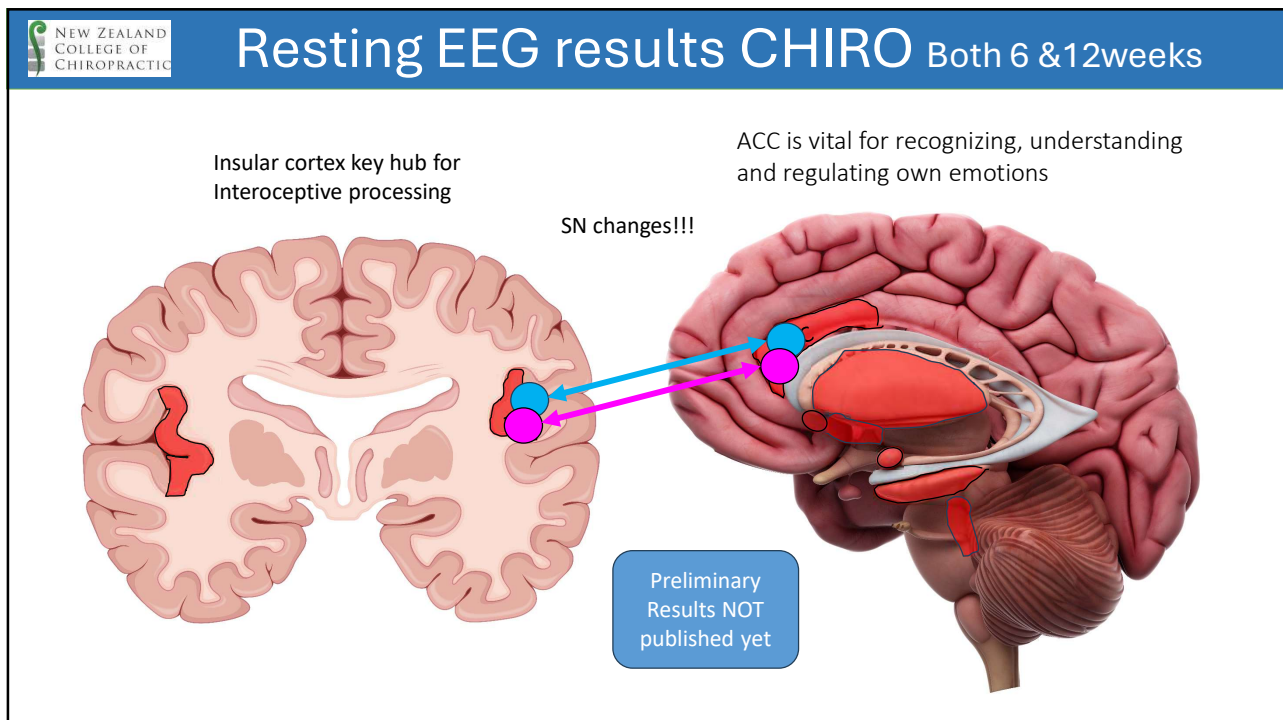
### Saliience Network



120



121



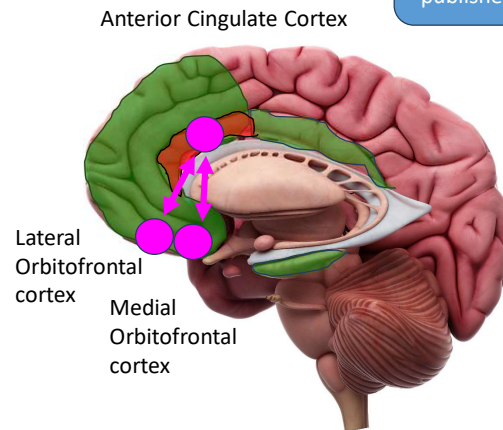
122



## Resting EEG results CHIRO Pre vs Post 12weeks

- The Orbitofrontal cortex plays a key role in the executive control of information processing and behavioral expression, decision-making and emotional regulation. It is important for the construction of the narrative sense of self and processing information about own mental states, beliefs, intentions and desires
- The Anterior Cingulate Cortex plays a key role in error detection, cognitive control, emotional regulation and autonomic regulation. It is vital for recognizing, understanding and regulating own emotions.
- May reflects the teenagers' brain's altered processing of interoceptive signals, improving sense of self
- This may support more flexible decision-making and better emotional regulation.
- It could be why they reported improved quality of life.

Preliminary  
Results NOT  
published yet



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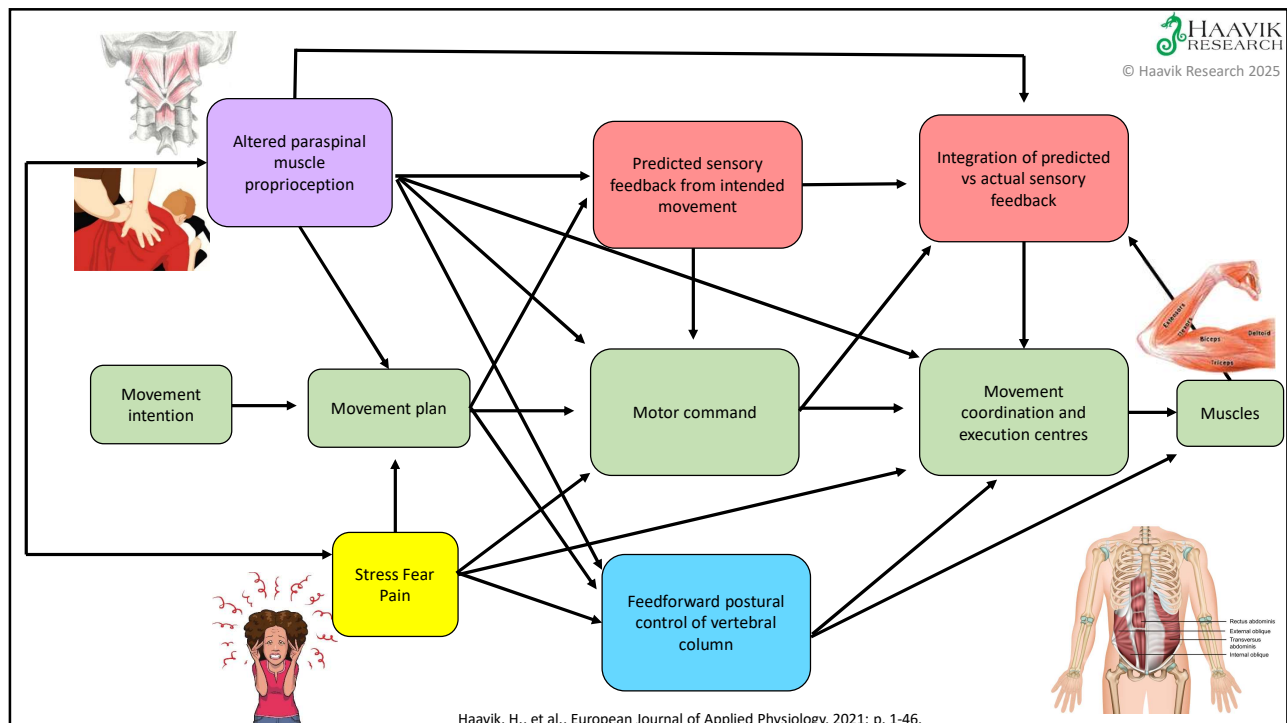
Symptoms don't just appear out of thin air



HAAVIK  
RESEARCH

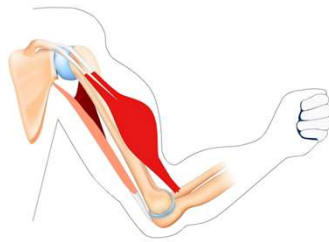
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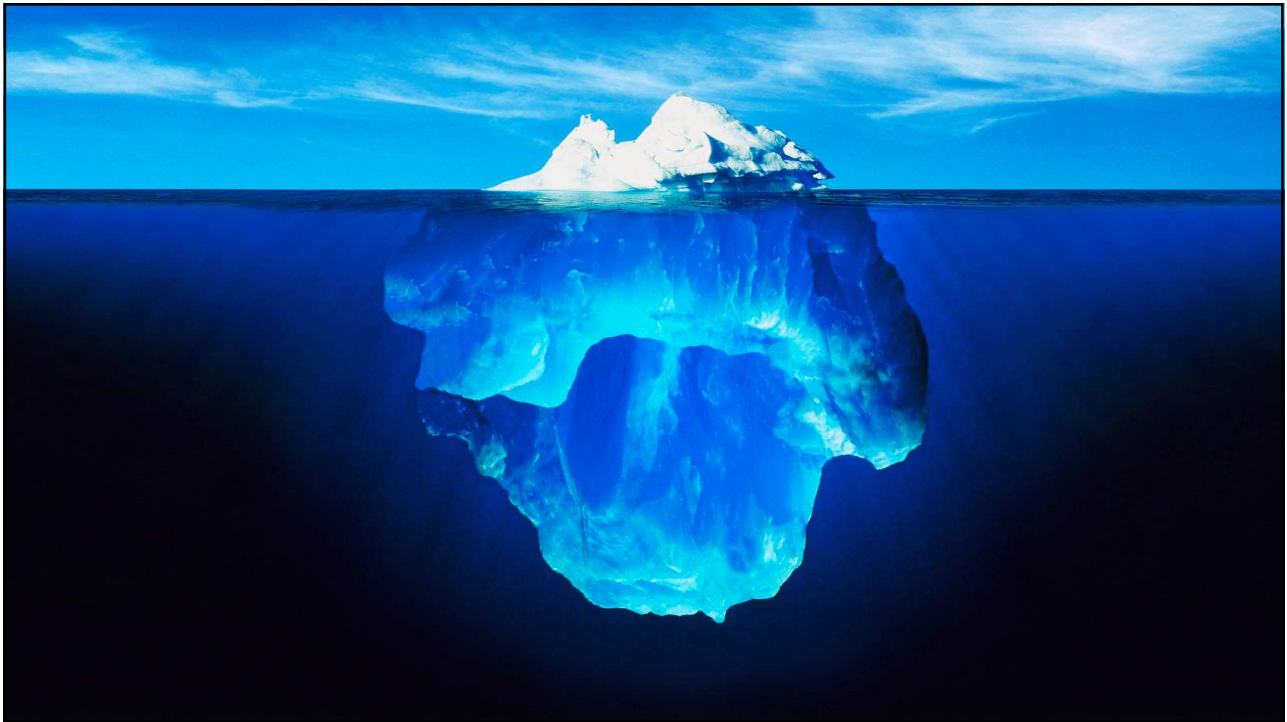
126

# Microtrauma



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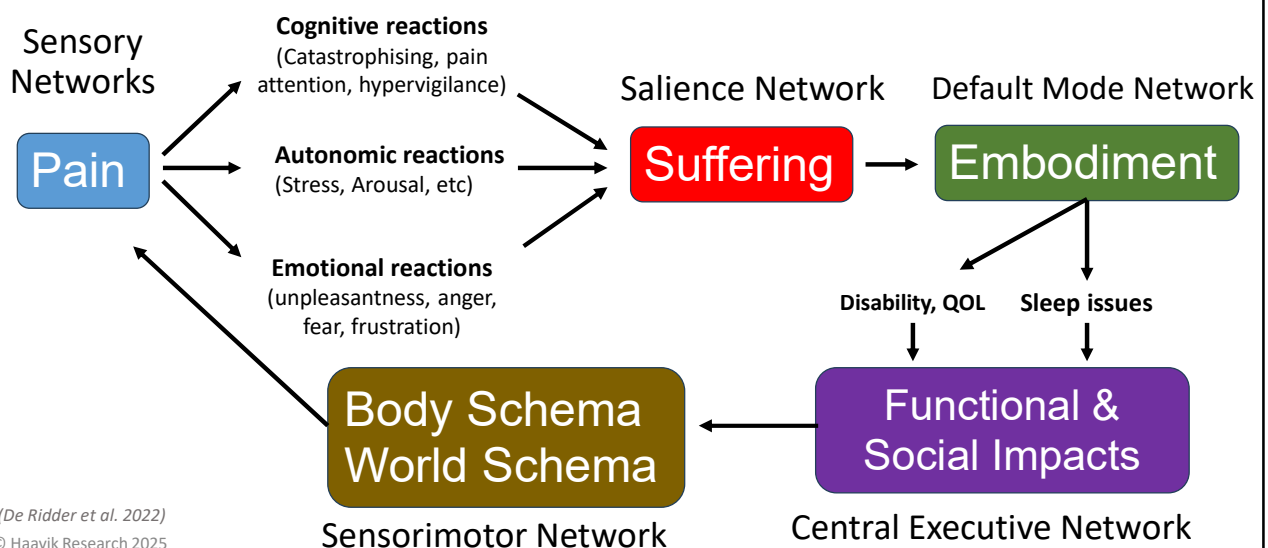
# Chronic Pain



*Apkarian et al. 2011 Pain and the brain: specificity and plasticity of the brain in clinical chronic pain. Pain; May 2008 Chronic pain may change the structure of the brain. Pain; Costigan et al 2009 Neuropathic Pain: A Maladaptive Response of the Nervous System to Damage. Annual Review of Neuroscience.*

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## The Chronicity of Pain



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## SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

## The Effect of Neuroscience Education on Pain, Disability, Anxiety, and Stress in Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain

Adriaan Louw, PT, MAppSc, Ina Diener, PT, PhD, David S. Butler, PT, EdD, Emilio J. Puentedura, PT, DPT

**ABSTRACT.** Louw A, Diener I, Butler DS, Puentedura EJ. The effect of neuroscience education on pain, disability, anxiety, and stress in chronic musculoskeletal pain. Arch Phys Med Rehabil 2011;92:2041-56.

**Objective:** To evaluate the evidence for the effectiveness of neuroscience education (NE) for pain, disability, anxiety, and stress in chronic musculoskeletal (MSK) pain.

**Data Sources:** Systematic searches were conducted on Biomed Central, BMJ.com, CINAHL, the Cochrane Library, NLM Central Gateway, OVID, ProQuest (Digital Dissertations), PsycInfo, PubMed/Medline, ScienceDirect, and Web of Science. Secondary searching (PEARLing) was undertaken, whereby reference lists of the selected articles were reviewed for additional references not identified in the primary search.

**Study Selection:** All experimental studies including randomized controlled trials (RCTs), nonrandomized clinical trials, and case series evaluating the effect of NE on pain, disability, anxiety, and stress for chronic MSK pain were considered for inclusion. Additional limitations: studies published in English, published within the last 10 years, and patients older than 18 years. No limitations were set on specific outcome measures of pain, disability, anxiety, and stress.

**Data Extraction:** Data were extracted using the participants, interventions, comparison, and outcomes (PICO) approach.

**Data Synthesis:** Methodological quality was assessed by 2 reviewers using the Critical Review Form-Quantitative Studies. This review includes 8 studies comprising 6 high-quality RCTs, 1 pseudo-RCT, and 1 comparative study involving 401 subjects. Most articles were of good quality, with no studies rated as poor or fair. Heterogeneity across the studies with respect to participants, interventions evaluated, and outcome measures used prevented meta-analyses. Narrative synthesis of results, based on effect size, established compelling evidence that NE may be effective in reducing pain ratings, increasing function, addressing catastrophization, and improving movement in chronic MSK pain.

**Conclusions:** For chronic MSK pain disorders, there is compelling evidence that an educational strategy addressing neurophysiology and neurobiology of pain can have a positive effect on pain, disability, catastrophization, and physical performance.

**Key Words:** Education; Musculoskeletal System; Neurophysiology; Neurosciences; Pain; Rehabilitation.  
© 2011 by the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine

**PAIN IS A POWERFUL** motivating force that guides treatment-seeking behaviors in patients.<sup>1-3</sup> Patient education has long been explored in the management of pain, anxiety, and stress associated with low back pain (LBP).<sup>4-7</sup> In the orthopedic domain, there are a number of studies on the effect of patient education on pain, with outcomes ranging from "excellent"<sup>8</sup> to "poor."<sup>9,10</sup> The study by Udermann et al<sup>8</sup> demonstrated that introduction of an individualized educational booklet on back biomechanics can result in decreased pain and frequency of LBP episodes in patients with chronic LBP (CLBP). In contrast to those findings, 2 systematic reviews<sup>9,10</sup> on the effect of individualized and/or group education for LBP and mechanical neck pain showed little efficacy for such education.

Most education programs for orthopedic patient populations have used anatomic and biomechanical models for addressing pain,<sup>4,11,14</sup> which not only have shown limited efficacy,<sup>4,11,12,15,16</sup> but may even have increased patient fears, anxiety, and stress, thus negatively impacting their outcomes.<sup>11,17,19</sup> Several educational strategies are advocated for patients with LBP, including biomechanical/back school type of education, evidence-based guideline education (ie, *The Back Book*<sup>20</sup>), cognitive behavioral therapy, and recently, neuroscience education (NE).

NE can be best described as an educational session or sessions describing the neurobiology and neurophysiology of pain, and pain processing by the nervous system. Instead of a

### List of Abbreviations

BPPT	brachial plexus provocation test
CFS	chronic fatigue syndrome
CLBP	chronic low back pain
CONSORT	Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials
LBP	low back pain
MSK	musculoskeletal
NE	neuroscience education

Louw, A., Diener, I., Butler, D. S., & Puentedura, E. J. (2011). The effect of neuroscience education on pain, disability, anxiety, and stress in chronic musculoskeletal pain. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, 92(12), 2041-2056.

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Neuroscience education about pain helps on its own!!

**Conclusions:** For chronic MSK pain disorders, there is compelling evidence that an educational strategy addressing neurophysiology and neurobiology of pain can have a positive effect on pain, disability, catastrophization, and physical performance.

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PA: Understanding Chronic Pain

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## What you tell your patient matters!

JOURNAL OF MANUAL & MANIPULATIVE THERAPY, 2017  
VOL. 25, NO. 5, 227-234  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10669817.2016.1211860>

  
Taylor & Francis  
Taylor & Francis Group



### The effect of manual therapy and neuroplasticity education on chronic low back pain: a randomized clinical trial

Adriaan Louw<sup>a</sup>, Kevin Farrell<sup>b</sup>, Merrill Landers<sup>c</sup>, Martin Barclay<sup>b</sup>, Elise Goodman<sup>b</sup>, Jordan Gillund<sup>b</sup>, Sara McCaffrey<sup>a</sup> and Laura Timmerman<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>International Spine and Pain Institute, Story City, IA, USA; <sup>b</sup>Department of Physical Therapy Education, Residency Program, St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA, USA; <sup>c</sup>Department of Physical Therapy, School of Allied Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV, USA

**ABSTRACT**  
**Objective:** To determine if a neuroplasticity educational explanation for a manual therapy technique will produce a different outcome compared to a traditional mechanical explanation.  
**Methods:** Sixty-two patients with chronic low back pain (CLBP) were recruited for the study. Following consent, demographic data were obtained as well as pain ratings for low back pain (LBP) and leg pain (Numeric Pain Rating Scale), disability (Cowestry Disability Index), fear-avoidance (Fear-Avoidance Beliefs Questionnaire), forward flexion (fingertips-to-floor), and straight leg raise (SLR) (inclinometer). Patients were then randomly allocated to receive one of two explanations (neuroplasticity or mechanical), a manual therapy technique to their lumbar spine, followed by post-intervention measurements of LBP, leg pain, forward flexion, and SLR.  
**Results:** Sixty-two patients (female 35 [56.5%]), with a mean age of 60.1 years and mean duration of 9.26 years of CLBP participated in the study. There were no statistically significant interactions for LBP ( $p = .325$ ), leg pain ( $p = .172$ ), and trunk flexion ( $p = .818$ ) between the groups, but SLR showed a significant difference in favor of the neuroplasticity explanation ( $p = .041$ ). Additionally, the neuroplasticity group were 7.2 times (95% confidence interval = 1.8–28.6) more likely to improve beyond the MDC on the SLR than participants in the mechanical group.  
**Discussion:** The results of this study show that a neuroplasticity explanation, compared to a traditional biomechanical explanation, resulted in a measureable difference in SLR in patients with CLBP when receiving manual therapy. Future studies need to explore if the increase in SLR correlated to changes in cortical maps of the low back.

**KEYWORDS**  
Pain; brain; plasticity; education; manual therapy; straight leg raise; remapping

Discussion: The results of this study show that a **neuroplasticity explanation**, compared to a **traditional biomechanical explanation**, resulted in a measureable difference in SLR in patients with CLBP when receiving manual therapy.

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Louw, A., Farrell, K., Landers, M., Barclay, M., Goodman, E., Gillund, J., . . . Timmerman, L. (2017). The effect of manual therapy and neuroplasticity education on chronic low back pain: a randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Manual & Manipulative Therapy*, 25(5), 227-234.

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Rheumatology 2005;44:509–516  
Advance Access publication 11 January 2005

doi:10.1093/rheumatology/keh529



## Simulating sensory–motor incongruence in healthy volunteers: implications for a cortical model of pain

C. S. McCabe, R. C. Haigh<sup>1</sup>, P. W. Halligan<sup>2</sup> and D. R. Blake

**Objectives.** Conflict between motor–sensory central nervous processing has been suggested as one cause of pain in those conditions where a demonstrable or local nociceptive aetiology cannot be convincingly established (e.g. complex regional pain syndrome type I, repetitive strain injury, phantom limb pain and focal hand dystonia). The purpose of this study was to discover whether pain could be induced in pain-free healthy volunteers when this conflict was generated transiently in a laboratory setting.

**Methods.** Forty-one consecutively recruited healthy adult volunteers without a history of motor or proprioceptive disorders performed a series of bilateral upper and lower limb movements whilst viewing a mirror/whiteboard, which created varied degrees of sensory–motor conflict during congruent/incongruent limb movements. A qualitative method recorded any changes in sensory experience.

**Results.** Twenty-seven subjects (66%) reported at least one anomalous sensory symptom at some stage in the protocol despite no peripheral nociceptive input. The most frequent symptoms occurred when incongruent movement was performed whilst viewing the reflected limb in the mirror condition, the time of maximum sensory–motor conflict. Symptoms of pain were described as numbness, pins and needles, moderate aching and/or a definite pain. Other sensations included perceived changes in temperature, limb weight, altered body image and disorientation. There were indications that some individuals were more susceptible to symptom generation than others.

**Conclusions.** Our findings support the hypothesis that motor–sensory conflict can induce pain and sensory disturbances in some normal individuals. We propose that prolonged sensory–motor conflict may induce long-term symptoms in some vulnerable subjects.

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## Did you know.....

Pain that you have had for more than 3 months means that your brain has learnt to be in pain, and my job is to retrain your brain out of pain. Because we know that the dysfunction of the spine plays a major role in both causing and maintaining these brain changes.

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## Why is all this important to understand?

Review

The Neuroscientist  
1-14

Low Back Pain: The Potential

### Abstract

Motor control, which relies on constant communication between motor and sensory systems, is crucial for spine posture, stability and movement. Adaptions of motor control occur in low back pain (LBP) while different motor adaption strategies exist across individuals, probably to reduce LBP and risk of injury. However, in some individuals with LBP, adapted motor control strategies might have long-term consequences, such as increased spinal loading that has been linked with degeneration of intervertebral discs and other tissues, potentially maintaining recurrent or chronic LBP. Factors contributing to motor control adaptations in LBP have been extensively studied on the motor output side, but less attention has been paid to changes in sensory input, specifically proprioception. Furthermore, motor cortex reorganization has been linked with chronic and recurrent LBP, but underlying factors are poorly understood. Here, we review current research on behavioral and neural effects of motor control adaptations in LBP. We conclude that back pain-induced disrupted or reduced proprioceptive signaling likely plays a pivotal role in driving long-term changes in the top-down control of the motor system via motor and sensory cortical reorganization. In the outlook of this review, we explore whether motor control adaptations are also important for other (musculoskeletal) pain conditions.

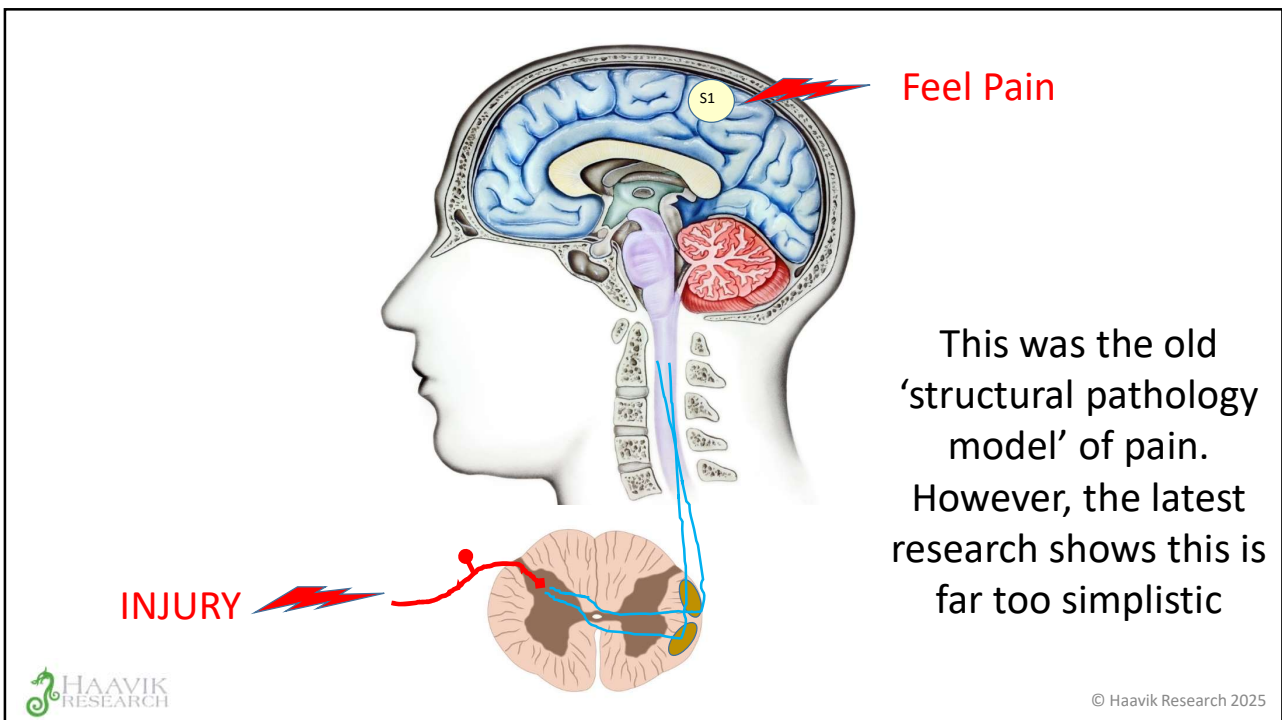
Meier, M. L., Vrana, A., & Schweinhardt, P. (2018). Low Back Pain: The Potential Contribution of Supraspinal Motor Control and Proprioception. *The Neuroscientist*, 1073858418809074. doi:10.1177/1073858418809074

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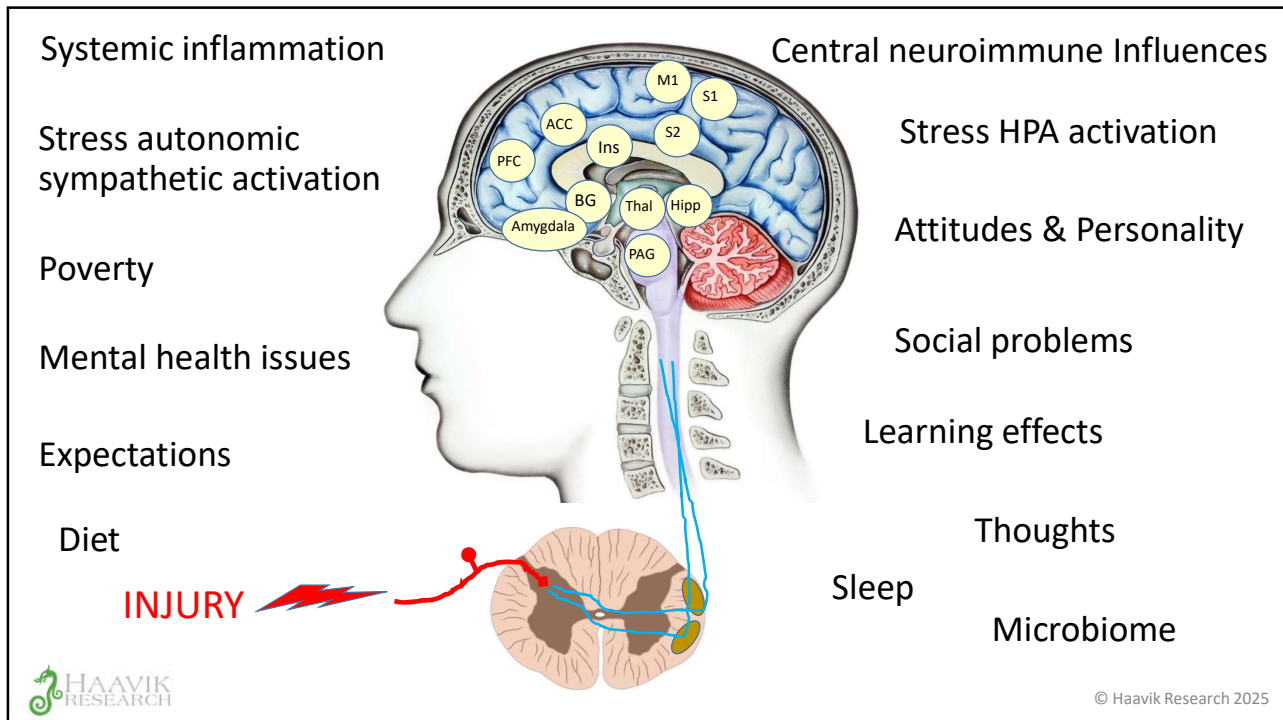
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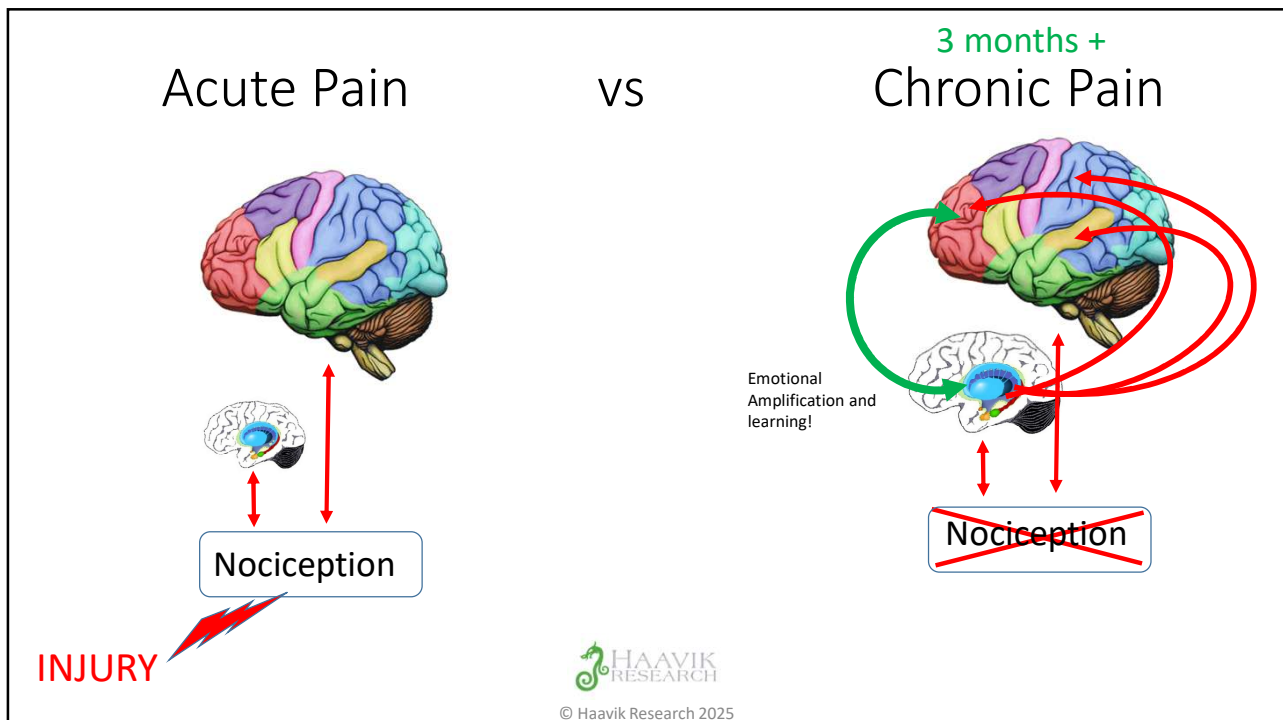
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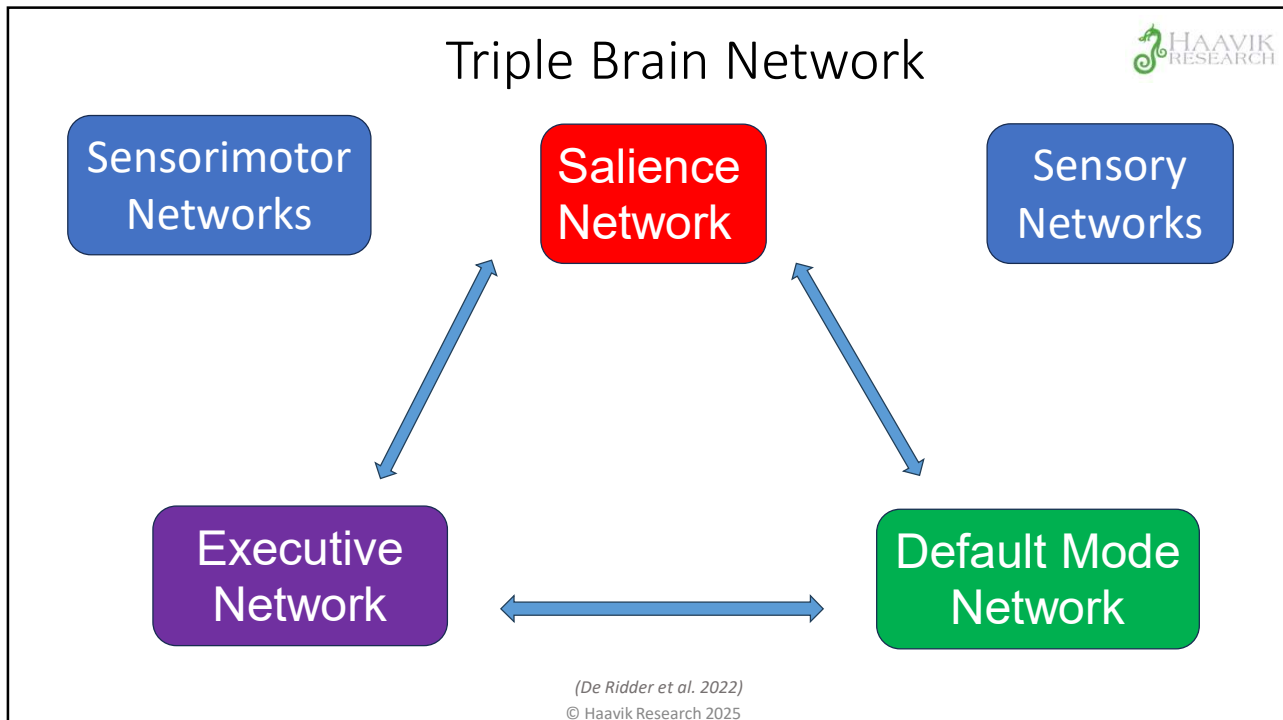


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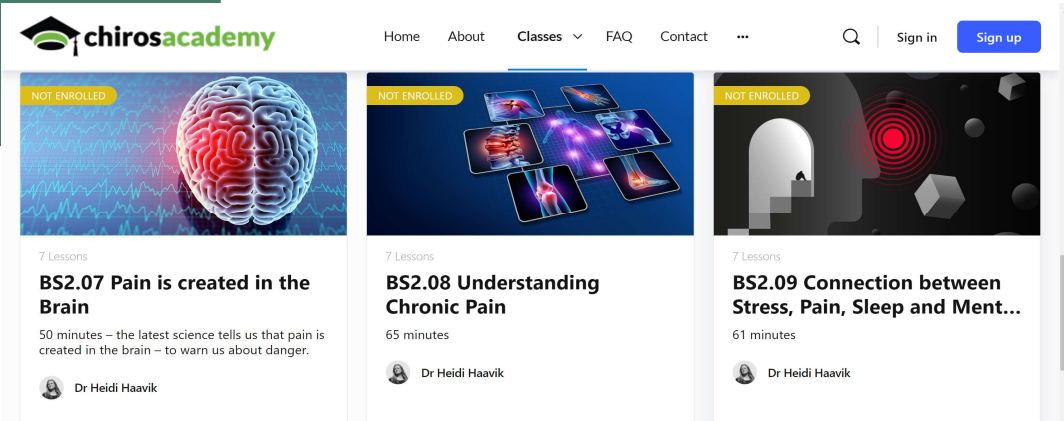
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## Understanding Pain Campaign

Are you concerned you do not know enough to answer Questions?



**ChirosAcademy.com**  
The science of chiropractic



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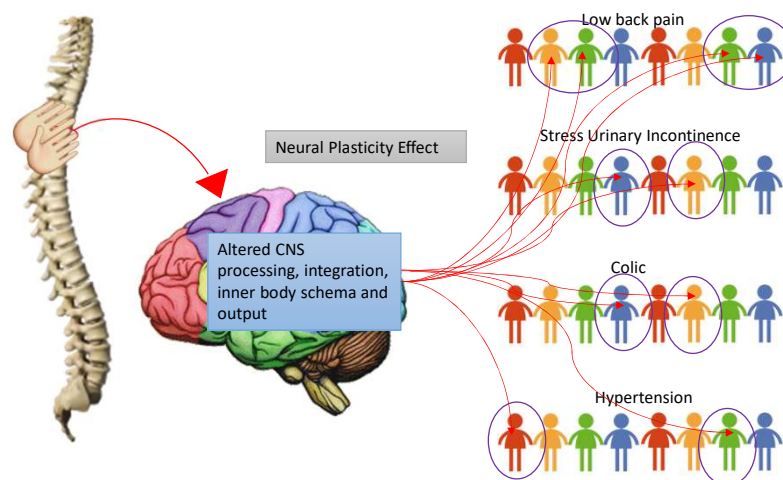
We don't yet know exactly what symptoms your subluxations will be causing for you!



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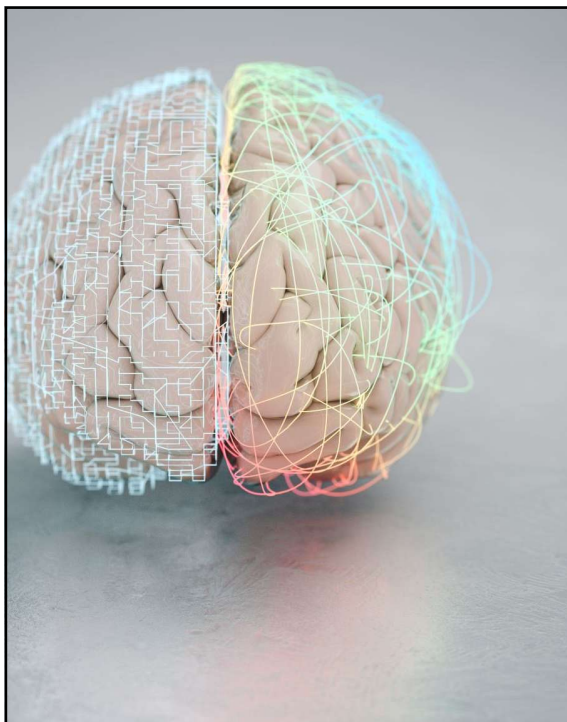
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## Responders vs Non-responders



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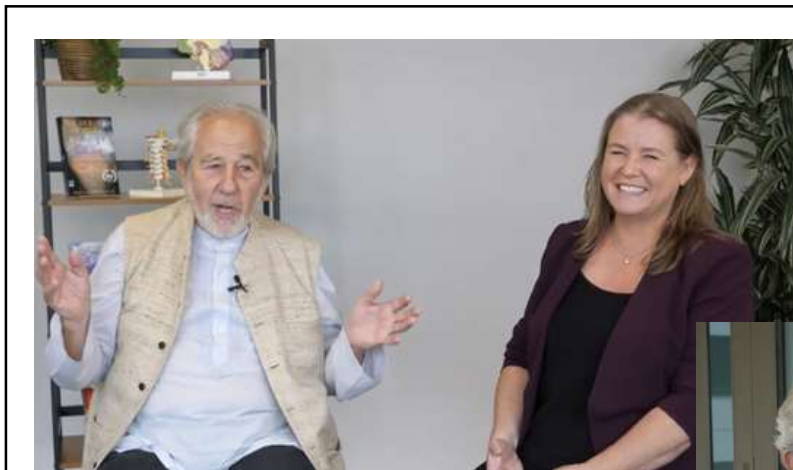
## The Short Version

"Research indicates that chiropractic care, that includes the adjustment of vertebral subluxations, enhances brain-body communication, allowing your brain to more accurately interpret internal and external signals. This improved perception of what is happening inside you and around you enables your brain to optimize bodily functions and adapt more effectively to your environment."

*Heidi Haavik*

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## Bruce Lipton & Heidi Haavik

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDWS3Xgj4WM>



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## Implications for question answers

- You do not need to adjust where they hurt, but instead where the subluxation is



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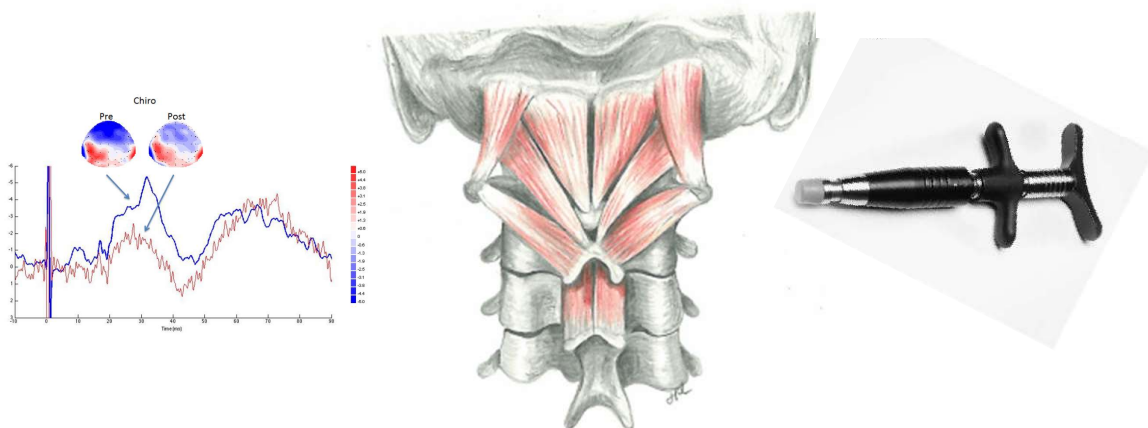
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## Does specificity matter?



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Imran Khan Niazi, Muhammad Samran Navid, Christopher Merkle, Imran Amjad, Nitika Kumari, Robert J. Trager, Kelly Holt, Heidi Haavik. 2024 A randomized controlled trial comparing different sites of high-velocity low amplitude thrust on sensorimotor integration parameters. *Scientific Report.* 14(1), p.1159.

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## Implications for question answers

- Pain is a danger warning system, not necessarily reflective of where the problem is.

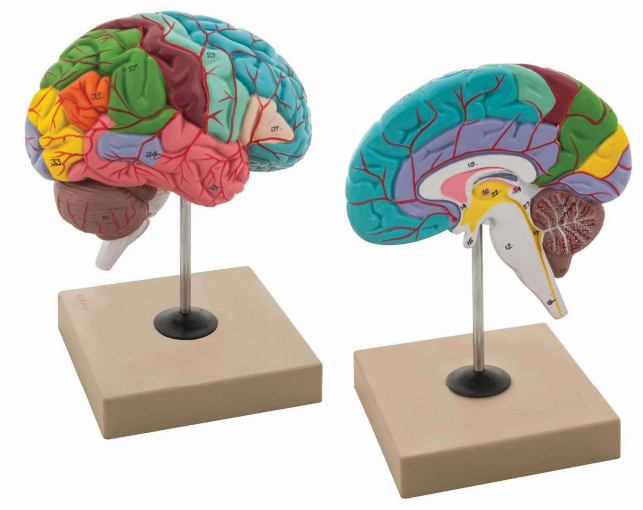


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Do you now think it would be a good idea to get yourself a brain model for your practice?



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- Dr Jenna Duher's PhD project at Auckland University
- Baby RCT
- Infant babies
- 3 months care
- EEG
- Movement measures at 6 months



## Cool Upcoming Research



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spinal  
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FOUNDATION

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SUMMIT



Jenna Duehr

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Enlighten the world  
about the science  
of the spine



MISSION

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**LearningHub**

✓ Online classes for your chiropractic assistants!

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**TODAY'S HANDOUT  
& Gifts**



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*Thank you!*

Enlightening the world about the science of chiropractic

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