

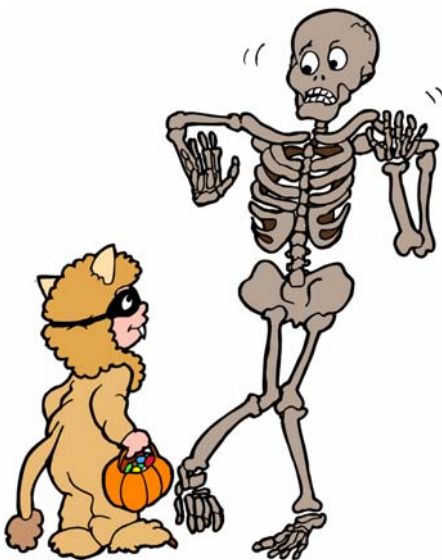
# OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Katie Gravesen, DC

## This Halloween Take Care Of Your Skeleton

*Happy Halloween! This year, while ghosts and goblins lurk outside, look within — to your own skeleton. Bone health is an essential, yet often ignored, component of a winning wellness plan. Taking care of your bones can scare off a host of frightening conditions such as osteoporosis, back pain, fractures and arthritis.*

*Doctors of chiropractic, like Dr. Gravesen, are skeletal health experts. This Halloween, join Dr. Gravesen in focusing on bone health. Read on to learn about the revolutionary chiropractic formula for making your skeleton smile.*



### Spooky Subluxations

The foundation of the chiropractic approach to bone health is the correction of dysfunctional areas in the spine. These areas, called vertebral subluxations, arise when movement is restricted or bones (vertebrae) are misaligned.

Vertebral subluxations are linked with a myriad of conditions including back pain, neck pain, headache and carpal tunnel syndrome. One study found

that 84 percent of patients with migraine or tension headache had at least two major vertebral subluxations in their upper neck (*Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics* 1992;15:418-29). Another investigation tracked 59 people with sciatic pain. When doctors of chiropractic evaluated these patients, they showed signs of vertebral subluxation in their low-backs.

Following chiropractic care, a full 90 percent of the patients reported experiencing relief (*Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics* 1995;18:335-42).

Additional reports suggest a possible link between vertebral subluxations and premenstrual syndrome, asthma, ear infection, bedwetting, high blood pressure and sinusitis.

Chiropractors, like Dr. Gravesen, correct vertebral subluxations with gentle maneuvers called chiropractic adjustments. A wealth of scientific studies show that chiropractic adjustments safely and effectively correct spinal dysfunction — and the disorders associated with it.

### How Scary Is Your Posture?

Posture is the key to a sound skeleton. Poor posture spurs structural imbalances, inciting bone disease. When the spine is out alignment, a straightening or reversal of the back's natural curves occurs. This leads to conditions such as "military neck" "hunch back" and "sway back."

Structural imbalances like these alter the natural motion of the spine, leading to degeneration and osteoarthritis. Imbalanced spines are also predisposed to injury from repetitive work or sports activities. In fact, many "injury-prone" individuals aren't merely unlucky — they have postural discrepancies.

Poor posture doesn't just affect the spine, it influences the entire skeleton. For instance, imbalances in the spine often cause one hip to rise slightly, raising up the adjoining leg. During walking or running, the legs receive a disproportionate amount of force — triggering injury.

Dr. Gravesen teaches patients simple "posture checks" to monitor



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their spinal alignment. When posture is askew, patients learn to regain alignment — and prevent future posture problems — through chiropractic adjustments, ergonomic modifications and exercise. Patients enjoy more attractive stances, warding off bone disorders while enhancing self-confidence.

### **Things That Go Creak in the Night**

Are your joints haunted by lack of motion? Restricted joints are starved of the fluids and nutrients that keep joints healthy — putting them on a collision course with a number of agonizing conditions, such as chronic back or neck pain. What's worse, long-term restricted range of motion, due to injury or a sedentary lifestyle, magnifies the risk of osteoarthritis (*Journal of Orthopedic & Sports Physical Therapy* 1998;28:203-15).

Chiropractic care can help you steer clear of this collision course. Range of motion (ROM) problems are associated with vertebral subluxations. Chiropractic adjustments effectively correct vertebral subluxations, promoting optimal ROM. In one study, investigators measured neck ROM prior to chiropractic adjustment, and then again 30 to 45 minutes following the procedure. Chiropractic adjustments to the side of the neck, where motion was restricted, produced a “dramatic reduction” in ROM restriction (*Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics*;1989;126:419-27). Over time, chiropractic adjustments stimulate long-term ROM corrections.

In addition to chiropractic adjustments, chiropractors recommend custom-tailored exercises; designed to encourage optimal ROM. Regular workouts are an integral part of the chiropractic approach to bone health. Exercise has been shown to boost skeletal integrity by increasing bone density. Especially helpful are “impact” or “weight-bearing” sports such as power-walking, running, volleyball, soccer, kickboxing and weightlifting. These activities subject the skeleton to mild trauma. Bones

respond to this trauma by becoming stronger.

People who suffer from joint pain and other skeletal problems often turn to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ketoprofen (Orudis®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin® and Nuprin®). However, research indicates that these medications can actually aggravate joint degeneration and cause other health problems. According to one study, “Given the detrimental effects of NSAIDs on joints and other organs, their use should be discouraged and their classification as a first-choice conservative treatment should be abolished.” (*Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics* 1997;20:400-14.)

### **Frighten Away Bone Degeneration**

Scientific studies show that certain foods, including sugar, hasten bone degeneration — while other foods boost bone health. Bone-eroding foods include refined sugar, grains and flour, processed foods, foods containing additives like EDTA, caffeine, soda, sodium-rich foods and meat.

On the other hand, bone-building foods include fruits and vegetables; whole grains and high-fiber foods; fish with edible bones, soy products, low-fat dairy products, raw nuts and seeds. When it comes to dietary supplements, calcium is the most well known bone-boosting supplement. However, simply choosing a calcium supplement off the drugstore shelf — without doing your homework — may give you nothing but a false sense of security.

First, look for a calcium citrate formulation. According to scientific research, calcium citrate is more potent than other forms of the mineral. For example, one study compared subjects who took calcium citrate with those who took calcium carbonate. Findings revealed that the blood calcium levels of participants taking calcium citrate were 2.5 times higher than those taking calcium carbonate. These findings indicate that the body is better able to

use calcium citrate than calcium carbonate. Many experts also caution that calcium be taken in conjunction with magnesium for optimal effectiveness. In addition to calcium, other bone-boosting supplements include vitamin D, potassium, vitamin K, manganese, zinc and antioxidant vitamins.

While calcium is the most popular supplement used to prevent osteoporosis, glucosamine and chondroitin sulfates are the most celebrated anti-osteoarthritis remedies. These supplements prompt the growth and repair of damaged joint cartilage by stimulating the production of two connective tissue building blocks — glycosaminoglycans and hyaluronic acid (*Alternative Medicine Review* 1998;3:27-39). By keeping joints healthy, glucosamine and chondroitin protect surrounding bones from degeneration. Other potent all-natural, anti-inflammatory, agents include the pineapple enzyme bromelain, flavonoids, curcumin (the active ingredient in the spice turmeric), thyme and fish oil.

Talk with your chiropractor to determine the supplements and dosages right for you.

### **Skip the Tricks and Treat Yourself To A Chiropractic Checkup**

This Halloween, don't get spooked by thoughts of future bone disease. Turn to your doctor of chiropractic for sound advice on how to prevent skeletal disorders. Don't delay — schedule an appointment for a chiropractic evaluation today. It's just the treat that will keep the trick knees, trick backs and other trick skeletal flaws away.

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