

# HEALTH

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## News & Views

January 2014

**Premenstrual Syndrome**  
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**Herniated Disc?**

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# Expect A Miracle



## Premenstrual Syndrome: It's Gone

A young woman in her thirties came to my office as a referral from another chiropractor who lives in a different province in Canada. Her brother-in-law originally recommended that she should see a chiropractor but had not given her any specific advice about who to see. She had been seeing a chiropractor and really did not have any significant change in her condition. I had the opportunity to go to a family wedding in Alberta with this brother-in-law and he asked me to see her. Part of what makes this profession so interesting is that it's always good to be able to help someone that you have a connection with.

The young woman had a lot of pain and stiffness in her neck, in her shoulders, in her legs and in her arms but in particular in her right arm and her right leg. She had a lot of problems with mobility. She had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and was seeing a neurologist. She was wondering if chiropractic would really be able to do anything about the multiple sclerosis though she did experience some benefit when she briefly saw her chiropractor brother-in-law in terms of having some reduction in the pain and some improvement in the mobility in the neck. She had heard similar words both from her brother-in-law and from me about the fact that chiropractic deals with the nervous system. It deals with the mind and the body and the spirit, and it deals with helping the person be the best they can be in terms of expressing their life form. Things that happen in the healing process go beyond just a simple equation of anatomy and physiology or putting some kind of drug into the process.

Because she heard that story she was willing to make a commitment to follow through on the care that was needed and as a result, her condition improved dramatically. The flashing lights that she had been seeing in front of her eyes stopped. She no longer had the stinging headache pain that she had experienced as a result of the attacks from multiple sclerosis. About three months into her care she said to me, "Umm, you know I don't know if I should say this to you because I don't know if chiropractic has anything to do with this, but I'm not having any of the premenstrual syndrome that I normally have. I am not experiencing any of the cramping that I've experienced since puberty." I said "This is a matter of your body working the way it's meant to work."

When we free the subluxations from the body by helping the bones move as they should, when we free the nervous system to function the way it was meant to function, and we provide the building blocks with the kind of nutrition they need in order to get better, healing miracles can happen. We give patients exercise to do; we give them all those things that are part of

a chiropractic lifestyle. They have the opportunity to express their fullest life expression.

Every time she goes to see her neurologist he says, "Your condition isn't getting any worse, in fact amazingly it seems to be getting better. I know you don't want to take any medication. All I can do is offer you the choice. But right now, you seem to be doing fine and the only thing I have to say is that as for seeing a chiropractor, that's okay but don't let them adjust your neck."

You know this is a part of a terrible paradox that we chiropractors find ourselves in. It's unfortunate that the paradox is that we get the results and the medical doctors see the results, but so many still aren't willing to allow us to do what we need to do in order to get the results in the first place.

In any event the important thing is that this young lady is doing very much better as a result of having chiropractic care. She did not give up on chiropractic just because the first experience wasn't as good as she expected. She has had all kinds of benefits. What we would consider to be a miracle is that she had no expectation of improvement, none whatsoever, but her delight in the results is profound.

Dr. Jamie Laws  
Toronto, Canada

Article courtesy of [Expectamiracle.com](http://Expectamiracle.com)



## Expand Your Viewpoint

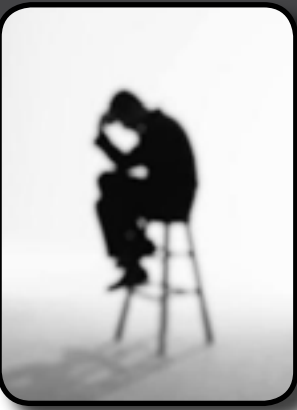
There is always something new to learn about, whether you are young or old or somewhere in between. Let us help you *know your stuff!*

Our Website of the Month  
(we think it's worth checking out)

[www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)

The best organic food is what's grown closest to you. Use this website to find farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area.

## Are You Over Thinking This?



When Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living," he most likely did not have in mind the persistent dwelling on distressing situations from the recent or distant past. It's called rumination and it can be one of the most destructive mental habits. It's closely linked to depression, and it can sap our confidence, our ability to solve problems, and our sense of control over our lives.

Ruminators repetitively go over events, asking big questions: Why did that happen? What does it mean...But they never find any answers. This isn't quite the same thing as plain old worrying: When we worry, we think about the future and what might happen. When we ruminate, we're usually fixated on the past and what we're certain has already happened, it can become as natural as breathing. It's like driving a well-known route and then suddenly finding yourself in the driveway with no idea how you arrived there. The more we play a problem over and over in our minds, typically the less equipped we are to fix it. Rumination ramps up activity in the brain's stress-response circuitry, which can eventually sap motivation..

Unfortunately, breaking the cycle isn't as easy as just snapping out of it. There's no off switch for rumination, simply telling yourself to stop is like pushing a beach ball under the water. The harder you push, the farther it will pop up. But there are a few strategies that, applied with patience, can keep over thinking from overtaking your life.

**Step 1: If You Can, Take Action** - Ruminators tend to get stuck in the analysis phase of a problem. If the trouble is specific and solvable, try to turn it into a concrete solution, writing it down may help. Rephrase the issue to reflect the positive outcome you're looking for.

**Step 2: Challenge Your Beliefs** - Ruminators may tend to have irrational or exaggerated thoughts called cognitive distortions. You can cultivate a little psychological distance by generating other interpretations of the situation, which makes your negative thoughts less believable.

**Step 3: Redirect Your Attention** - The key is finding an activity that's absorbing. Physical activity that combines mental engagement and social contact, such as tennis or a brisk nature walk with a friend is good. You could also challenge someone to a round of cards or a Scrabble match etc.

**Step 4: Resist the Urge to "Talk It Out"** - Brainstorming solutions with a friend is great. But dissecting and constantly revisiting negative details of a problem with someone is co-rumination and can send you further into despair. Studies have linked co-rumination between female friends to a significant increase in the stress hormone cortisol.

**Step 5: Observe Mindfulness** - It's difficult to control what you think. But those thoughts don't have to control you. One way to manage ruminative thinking is through mindfulness, a form of meditation that consists of simply focusing on the present moment without judgment. Try noticing your thoughts as if they were leaves floating by in a stream. Don't respond to them—just let them go. Watching your ruminative thoughts without engaging with them can turn the volume down, you see them pass by, but you're not getting sucked into the current.

**Step 6: Be Patient** - Ruminating can be a stubborn problem, so you may struggle a bit at first. These steps definitely get easier with practice, the last thing you need to do is ruminate about the fact that you can't stop ruminating. Take heart that you're attempting to know thyself. Socrates would surely approve.



This recipe is Paleo and Gluten Free!

## Paleo Flank Steak with Chimichurri Sauce

1 1/2 lb beef flank steak  
6 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 c grape seed oil  
1/2 c white wine vinegar  
1/2 c lemon juice  
1/4 c parsley  
1 tsp crushed red pepper

Cut diamond pattern 1/8 inch deep into both sides of the beef. Place in shallow glass or plastic dish.  
Shake remaining ingredients in tightly covered jar.  
Pour 1 c sauce over beef.  
Cover remaining sauce. Cover and refrigerate beef, turning occasionally, at least 4 hours.  
Remove beef from sauce.  
Grill beef 4 or 5 inches from medium coals, turning and brushing with sauce once, until desired doneness, 6 to 8 minutes on each side for medium.  
Cut beef diagonally across the grain into thin slices.  
Serve with reserved sauce.

# Chiropractic and Herniated Discs

## What are Herniated Discs?

The spinal bones are aligned in a single line and separated from each other by cartilaginous structures called discs. These discs act like shock absorbers and protect the spine from injury. However, with age, the discs become softer, can become thicker and can slip out of position when under stress. This is called disc herniation or sometimes referred to as a 'slipped disc'. On occasion, the spinal bones get misaligned and the disc herniates as a result of this.

Patients who suffer from a herniated disc experience pain as the primary symptom. Pain occurs in and around the area of disc herniation and sometimes in either one or both of the legs. It can be associated with altered sensation in the legs and arms as well. Rarely, in very severe cases, there can also be problems with bowel and bladder habits.

## Chiropractic Treatment for Herniated Discs

Medical treatment can involve taking pain killers and even surgery. However, chiropractors approach disc herniation as they do most problems, without masking the pain with medication and instead aligning the spine so that the body can begin to heal itself. Some techniques that your chiropractor may use include:

**Muscle relaxation** – Herniated discs can be associated with spinal muscle spasms. Trigger point therapy and deep tissue massage are beneficial.

**Joint manipulation** – Chiropractors are trained in spinal adjustments and manipulations. By doing so, any stress on the discs and the nerves are relieved. This helps to treat the pain instead of masking it with pharmaceuticals.

**Muscle reconditioning** – With lower back pain due to a slipped disc, the tone of the lower abdominal muscles and the lower back is dysfunctional (not functioning like it should). The chiropractor will devise a structured training regime that will be aimed at toning up the muscles and strengthening the lower back.

**Cryotherapy** - This refers to the application of a cold pack at the site of disc herniation. This helps reduce pain and inflammation locally.

**Controlled movements** – Disc herniation is often a result of sudden movements; but when analyzed further, it appears that it occurs over a period of time as a consequence of repetitive strain. Patients will be advised to avoid sudden movements and will be taught to adopt certain postures that do not place stress on the spine.

## Help Is At Hand!

Chiropractic manipulations are performed by trained experts and are very safe. Studies have shown that chiropractic manipulations by licensed chiropractor resulted in a significant reduction in pain. In addition, the side effects of chiropractic care have been shown to be extremely rare. If anything, patients may experience mild discomfort and tiredness after the manipulation; which is completely normal. If you have a herniated painful disc, then chiropractic manipulation can provide safe and effective pain relief.

