

Meade et al. BMJ Volume 311, 5 August 1995. Randomized Comparison of Chiropractic and Hospital Outpatient Management for Low Back Pain: Results from Extended Follow Up.

(This was a 3 year follow-up to the 1990 Meade study)

Objective: To compare the effectiveness over three years of chiropractic and hospital outpatient management for low back pain.

Design: RCT. Patients were followed up to two years. Chiropractic and hospital outpatient clinics in 11 centers. 741 patients ages 18-64. Outcome measures included changes in Oswestry scores and in score for pain and patient satisfaction with allocated treatment.

Results: According to total Oswestry scores improvements in all patients at three years was about 29% more in those treated by chiropractors than in those treated by the hospitals. The beneficial of chiropractic on pain was particularly clear. Those treated by chiropractors had more further treatment for back pain after the completion of the trial treatment. Among both, those initially referred from chiropractors and from hospitals more rated chiropractic helpful at three years than hospital management.

Conclusion: At three years the results confirm the finding of an earlier report that when chiropractic or hospital therapists treat patients with low back pain as they would in day-to-day practice those treated by chiropractors derived more benefit and long-term satisfaction than those treated by hospitals.