



ICA POLICY STATEMENT Radiography in Chiropractic

Since its establishment in 1926, the International Chiropractors Association (ICA) has recognized that radiography is an important assessment tool for practicing Doctors of Chiropractic. The use of radiography in Chiropractic dates back to the early 1900's. Since that time, research studies have accumulated resulting in radiography being recognized as a clinically valid and efficacious method to not only evaluate multiple aspects of human spinal anatomy and pathology, but also identify and objectively quantify vertebral subluxations, altered spinal biomechanics and postural misalignments. All fifty of the US States have incorporated authority for Doctors of Chiropractic to apply radiographic procedures in their respective scopes of practice and all US chiropractic colleges teach radiographic procedures and analysis.

The evidence-based choice to use radiography in chiropractic practice should be a decision between the patient and their Doctor of Chiropractic. The best available evidence, including the Practicing Chiropractors Committee on Radiology Protocols (www.pccrp.org), can serve as a guide in the clinical decision-making process.

Use of Radiography for Subluxation Detection:

Doctors of Chiropractic are responsible for assessing the spine to appropriately determine whether or not the patient has a vertebral subluxation and determining if, and how a chiropractic adjustment may be applied. Radiography is a valuable clinical tool for the detection of vertebral subluxation.

Use of Radiography in Chiropractic Technique Systems:

The choice to use radiography may be affected by a particular technique system that relies on use of radiographic findings to identify subluxation of the spine and to determine the course of care. Doctors of Chiropractic are free to choose their preferred adjusting "technique(s)" including those that have established the need for radiographs to determine where and how to perform the adjustment of the spine to correct a subluxation. Radiograph studies are a standard clinical tool providing necessary objective clinical evidence and are a critical component of numerous chiropractic techniques taught in CCE (Council on Chiropractic Education) accredited Doctor of Chiropractic Programs.

Use of Repeat Radiography Studies:

The ICA also supports the doctor's ability to monitor the progression of spinal health using radiography to quantify improvement in subluxation and other biomechanical conditions of the spine.

Safety of Radiography in Chiropractic Clinical Practice:

The ICA recognizes that the utilization of radiography in chiropractic clinical settings and resultant equivalent dosages for the patient is less than recognized levels that produce oncogenic and genotoxic effects. Therefore, the safety of radiography is well supported in chiropractic clinical practice.



Applying Medical Radiography Guidelines to the Practice of Chiropractic:

Any guideline or other policy that declares limited use of radiography in chiropractic practice while referencing medical standards and medical guidelines are inappropriately applying medical guidelines to the practice of chiropractic. There is no validity to any guideline, report, policy, or other document that utilizes the findings of medical guidelines when applied to the practice of chiropractic.

Adopted by ICA Board May 12, 2022