



Veterans: How to receive the services provided by a Doctor of Chiropractic

Many veterans find they are unable to receive a referral for chiropractic services with their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) primary care provider (PCP) and wonder how they can do so. If you are denied a referral, there are still ways to obtain the services delivered by a Doctor of Chiropractic that you need and deserve.

Services provided by doctors of chiropractic are part of the standard medical benefits package available to all eligible veterans. VA facilities can choose to provide this benefit in two ways:

1. By having an on-site chiropractic clinic, or;
2. By sending veterans to a private Doctor of Chiropractic in the community, using the "fee-basis" approach where the VA pays the bill.

Currently there are 42 VA facilities with chiropractic clinics. Over the past several years, thousands of veterans have received the services provided by doctors of chiropractic at VA clinics as well as through the fee-basis procedure.

Many VA primary care providers are routinely discussing the services provided by doctors of chiropractic as an option with their patients. If your PCP has not discussed this with you, bring it up and explain why you think the services delivered by doctors of chiropractic can be a good option for your particular problem.

The following reasons to consider the services delivered by doctors of chiropractic may apply to you:

- I have tried it before and it worked for me
- I have a friend or relative with similar problems and a Doctor of Chiropractic helped them
- I prefer to avoid unnecessary pain medication for my problem
- Services delivered by doctors of chiropractic such as spinal manipulation are part of current VA/DoD guidelines on treating back pain

Services delivered by doctors of chiropractic are part of your standard VA benefits and no VA facility can tell you they "do not provide" these essential health benefits. Some veterans have found their local VA is reluctant to send them for fee-basis care outside the VA facility, and have required they jump through many hoops to get a referral for a Doctor of Chiropractic. This is against VA policy and does not go along with VA's own stated mission to be "veteran-centered."

You should be concerned if your PCP refers you for fee-basis care and someone else at the facility denies that referral. Many times the VA facility is trying to save money by denying fee-basis care delivered by doctors of chiropractic, even though they spend a great deal on numerous other treatments.

If you suspect that you were unfairly denied the services delivered by doctors of chiropractic you should make a complaint with the patient advocate at your facility.

Further, you should contact your Member of Congress and let them know you are having difficulty accessing the vital care you are owed and promised by the VA.

To contact your Representative in the U.S. House, go [here](#). To contact your U.S. Senator, go [here](#).

If that is not successful you should bring it to the attention of a Veteran's Service Organization such as Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wounded Warrior Project, American Legion or others. The more veterans that make this known, the more likely it is that positive change will occur.

The VA determines healthcare eligibility based on a number of factors, including the type and extent of military injuries, military service and a veteran's financial status. [Click Here to learn more about VA Healthcare Eligibility](#).

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