



newbury
CHIROPRACTIC CENTRE

FOCUS ON CONDITIONS:

SHORT LEG SYNDROME



CHIROPRACTIC:
SAFE & EFFECTIVE TREATMENT

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SHORT LEG SYNDROME

If you've ever been told you have a short leg, it is important to know whether the condition is functional or anatomical. Both types of short leg can cause increased stresses to the pelvis and lumbar spine, often resulting in low back, buttock, hip and leg pain. The pain is often worse when standing, walking or running and can cause complications higher in the spine, leading to shoulder and neck problems and influencing your balance and weight distribution.

Hip, knee, ankle and foot pain, and shin splints, are not uncommon, with a tendency to pull the same muscle repeatedly, despite giving the correct healing time.

Knowing when and how the symptoms started will help your Chiropractor understand the reason for the short leg, which must be assessed and diagnosed before your Chiropractor can recommend the best treatment.

Functional Short Leg

This is where both legs are structurally the same length, but there is still an apparent short leg.

The leg length is commonly measured from a bony protruberance on the front of the pelvis (ASIS) to the top of the inside ankle bone (medial malleolus) and will be equal both sides.

Despite symmetrical measurements, a functional short leg is due to rotation of the pelvis on one or both sides of the sacroiliac joints. It can arise from repeatedly sleeping on one side, carrying items on one side, running clockwise on a track, using the phone on one side, lifting suitcases or carrying children on one side over a period of years.

This causes increased stresses on the muscles, nerves and joints involved, leading to an imbalance in the muscles on one side of your body.

Runners are commonly affected by this and will notice they impact the pavement harder with one foot than the other, and will often wear down one heel faster than the other.



Resolution

During the consultation, your Chiropractor will examine your spine and pelvis for symmetry of movement and measure the leg length to ensure an anatomical length discrepancy is not the cause for your pain.

Once a functional short leg has been diagnosed, treatment will address the underlying biomechanical cause and areas of imbalance.

Anatomical Short Leg

This is where one leg is structurally shorter than the other. This can be due to growth problems, usually when one leg grows too much/not enough, malformed hip joint sockets (hip dysplasia), problems with the femoral head (slipped or crumbling epiphysis), or a flat foot on one side. A clubfoot or incorrectly formed muscles and ligaments of the lower leg can also give rise to a leg length discrepancy, although this is rare. Other causes of a structural leg length difference can arise from fractures or infections of the long bones in the leg which interrupt normal growth.

A difference in leg length will cause a change in the way you walk, placing uneven stresses on the pelvic joints making them more susceptible to irritation and injury. When standing, it can cause a tilt of the pelvis and, if severe enough, can alter the way you hold yourself causing a lateral curvature to your spine (scoliosis) as you try to compensate and stay straight and upright. This in turn can cause neck and upper back/shoulder problems.

Treatment

Once a thorough examination and x-rays (if needed) have been completed, a heel lift will be recommended and measured to balance out the difference in leg length and reduce the stresses on the pelvis. Chiropractic adjustments may be needed to the spine and pelvis as your joints adjust to the corrections made. In larger leg length differences, surgical correction may be an option.

FAQs ABOUT CHIROPRACTIC



What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic is the third largest primary health care profession in the world after medicine and dentistry.

Who regulates the profession?

In the UK, Chiropractic is a fast-growing, independent profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council.

How does it work?

Chiropractic places its emphasis on the diagnosis and management of problems affecting the nerves, muscles and joints of the body.

What can Chiropractors do?

Most people associate Chiropractic with the treatment of back pain, neck pain and headaches but Chiropractors treat many other conditions as well, including most ailments and complaints affecting feet, knees, hips, arms, shoulders and hands.

Chiropractors use an holistic approach that takes into consideration your overall health and lifestyle.

Although best known for manipulating joints (also known as 'adjusting'), Chiropractors utilise a number of different procedures in the course of patient care such as heat, cold, electrical stimulation, ultrasound, traction, postural support, exercise programmes and dietary management.

How can I find out more?

For more information on Chiropractic and to find out how your Chiropractor can help you, please contact us on **01635 48088**.