



CONSUMER GUIDE: HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHIROPRACTOR

by Jasper Hulscher

Introduction

“ *Choosing a healthcare provider to help alleviate musculoskeletal pain can be a daunting task. With so many different therapies available, it isn’t always easy to understand the differences between practitioners or the benefits of one treatment over another.* ”

Chiropractic care is a highly regarded form of treatment for common conditions such as **neck pain, back pain, joint stiffness and mobility issues**. Alongside other manual therapies such as osteopathy, it is an effective, non-invasive solution to pain and discomfort.

Often, people seek medical help based on a recommendation from a friend, a referral from a GP or in response to marketing material produced by a practice. **But how should you really choose a chiropractor or any other health professional?**

In this guide, you will learn how to identify your requirements, compare practitioners and avoid making costly mistakes. Given the right advice, you may find the right practitioner for you and **begin a journey towards a more comfortable, pain-free future.**

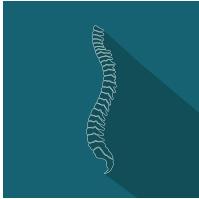


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Why this guide has been created



80%

The number of people thought to suffer from back pain at some point during their life.



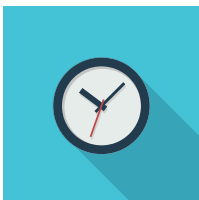
10 million

The number of people in the UK who get headaches regularly.



8.8 million

Days taken off work due to musculoskeletal disorders in the UK in 2015/16.



16 days

The average time taken off work per person each year in the UK due to musculoskeletal issues.



£1,654.40

The average cost of missed earnings per person, per year.



£3,500,000 million

The overall cost of back pain to the UK economy in lost working hours.

Musculoskeletal problems such as back pain have become a significant part of the modern lifestyle. Long hours sat behind a desk and evenings lounging in front of the TV contribute to a sedentary lifestyle that is damaging to the musculoskeletal system. With this in mind, it has never been more important for people to carefully consider their medical requirements and choose the right health professional to help improve their health and provide valuable advice on general wellbeing.

Although I am a chiropractor and am passionate about the benefits of chiropractic as a form of treatment, I also believe that individuals should understand all of the treatment options out there for tackling musculoskeletal problems. Most importantly, it is essential that patients understand how to find the right health professional for their needs and are able to build a trusting working relationship with them – be it an osteopath, a physiotherapist or a chiropractor.

With nearly two decades' experience as a chiropractor, I have treated thousands of patients suffering from issues such as back, hip and neck pain. Learning about their requirements and hearing how many have spent long periods of time without treatment or receiving treatment that isn't right for them has led me to create this guide.



I hope you find a lot of value in this guide
Enjoy!

Jasper Hulscher

Clinic Director,
Milton Chiropractic Clinic

Choosing a chiropractor: the basics

Are they qualified?

Check to ensure that your chosen chiropractor is registered with the General Chiropractic Council (GCC). The GCC regulates the practice of chiropractic in the United Kingdom, promoting patient safety and setting standards of chiropractic conduct and practice. All chiropractors must be registered with the GCC in order to treat patients by law.

Many registered practitioners will feature membership of the GCC on their website but you can also check this by searching the register at <http://www.gcc-uk.org/advanced-search/>

If you are unable to find an osteopath on the register, it is important that you contact the GCC and notify them of the individual or clinic in order for them to investigate.

To gain their qualifications in the UK, a chiropractor is required to complete a Masters in Chiropractic at a university. Typically, this is a full-time course studied over five years and provides students with the skills and knowledge to effectively and safely treat patients.

Are they any good?

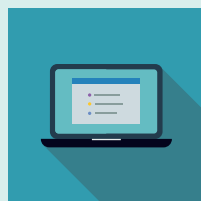
As with any profession or industry, some individuals and businesses are better than others. And when it comes

to your health and wellbeing, you shouldn't expect to settle for anything less than the best. In the UK, we are used to researching cars, hotels and restaurants in depth. But we do not always apply the same rigorous checks to healthcare providers.

Check online:

Take the time to carry out a little careful research and

making that all-important choice between the health professionals in your area should become much easier. Through tools such as Facebook and Google it is possible to check up on other people's experience of your local chiropractors. Not all reviews will be 100% positive (the more patients that leave comments, the more likely you are to find bits of constructive criticism from time to time), but it is important for you to ask yourself if, on balance, you feel confident about approaching a clinic or individual practitioner.

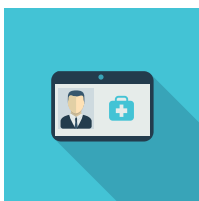


Check with family and friends: If you have friends or family members who have suffered from similar aches and pains to you, it is also worth asking them if they have sought treatment in the past. And if so, would they recommend the healthcare providers who looked after them.



Check with health insurers:

Another tell-tale sign of a high quality therapist is the relationships that they share with health insurance providers. If you plan to claim back for a course of treatment, you will undoubtedly want to know that you can make a claim through your preferred healthcare professional. Beyond the financial implications, however, it is worth noting that some insurers, such as BUPA, only reimburse patients for osteopathy or chiropractic care if the clinician has a minimum of 5 years' experience and has been recommended by two independent healthcare specialists practicing in related fields – such as neurosurgeons or orthopaedic surgeons.



Knowing that an osteopath or chiropractor is respected and recognised by such established specialists represents high praise indeed. This can be particularly important if you are looking for a therapy to help you through post-operative rehabilitation, where communication between your surgeon and the therapist can contribute towards getting you back on your feet quicker.

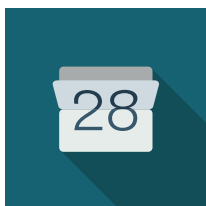
Check the services they offer:

Not all clinics are equal in healthcare. Some clinics offer scanning services, such as foot scans to measure biomechanics and orthotics, some offer Myovision scanning, shockwave therapy, dry needling or an array of other services.



Others price themselves on their customer service in the form of direct access to a clinician via email, access to tailored exercise videos, text reminders for appointments or call-back services. You may even find extended opening hours and customer parking facilities to be high on your list of requirements. Once you have narrowed down your decision to two or three practices that you believe to be reputable, assess the range of facilities they offer and try to decide which might be most suitable for your needs.

Check availability: The last thing you want as a patient is to find a healthcare provider you think is right for you, only to find that you have to wait weeks for an appointment. Although a busy practice is a good sign – it tells you that your chosen specialist is popular – it is important that you can access treatment quickly for your problem. If you are in serious pain, waiting for weeks for treatment can be too much to bear. Therefore it is essential that you check with your preferred health professional that during the crucial



early stages of care that they have sufficient availability to see you.

Turning research into reality

Browsing the Internet or asking friends for advice is all well and good, but many people choose not to take their health matters any further.

“ *Many people suffer every day in silence for years, putting up with back or neck pain because they simply didn't get round to booking that initial consultation.* ”

Often, individuals feel that they do not want to make a fuss, don't want to spend money or simply believe that their problem may get better. However, the reality with millions of cases of musculoskeletal disorders is that over time they will only worsen. Getting the right medical assistance and pursuing a course of treatment that is right for your condition can make a significant improvement to your quality of life.

So, here is a 4-step plan to get you on the path to recovery.

1

Make a commitment to act

Firstly, you must make a commitment to act. Reading and research means nothing if you do not act on your decision to seek attention from your chosen healthcare provider.

2

List your objectives

Make a list of what you find important in your healthcare provider: is it online reviews that matter to you most? Is it extended opening hours or the most convenient location? Is it a combination of awards, accreditations or affiliations with sports teams? Perhaps it's simply a money-back guarantee. Often, ranking the criteria that you value the most can help you to make a swift selection as to the right chiropractors for you.

3

Make contact

Once you have chosen a practice, it is time to make contact. Modern clinics typically offer the option of getting in touch via phone, email, social media or even Live Chat. However, you choose to make an initial enquiry, you want to see that the practice are prompt, polite and efficient in their response. A well-run practice will do their utmost to welcome you in as a new patient and make you feel comfortable, so don't be afraid to ask questions at this stage and voice any concerns you may have. **Remember:** you are not obliged to book an appointment with the first clinic you contact. There is nothing wrong with making enquiries with a number of practices before making your final decision.

4

Book the appointment

Once you are comfortable with your choice of healthcare professional, make sure you book the appointment and don't leave it until another day before you have your initial consultation. By delaying and cancelling appointments, people often fall back into the mindset that their health concerns can wait and that the discomfort can be endured. Our advice is always to take advantage of the initial consultation to find out precisely what the problem is and what a reputable chiropractor would recommend to treat the problem.

Why you want to choose the right health care provider

- ☒ You don't just want to live life, but thrive!
- ☒ You want to enjoy your hobbies again
- ☒ You want to enjoy your sports again
- ☒ You prefer a long term fix over a short term solution
- ☒ You want to be pain free
- ☒ You want to be seen as an individual, needing specific exercises for your problem
- ☒ You want to make sure you can go to work and provide for your family

7 Common misconceptions about private healthcare

“ As we have discussed already, some people are reluctant to seek the help of healthcare professionals such as osteopaths and chiropractors. Every individual is different and their motivations for getting assistance with a musculoskeletal dysfunction can vary. ”

However, there are a number of common misconceptions that patients have in relation to booking a consultation – misconceptions that prevent an individual from accessing treatments capable of dramatically improving their health and wellbeing. Let's study some of these misconceptions more closely.

I can manage my problem with painkillers: Although they may be effective in offering swift relief from immediate pain, relying on painkillers to manage a significant musculoskeletal or neuromuscular issue can be dangerous. Painkillers are simply designed to treat pain and mask a problem rather than getting to the root of a problem.



Pain is an important part of the human make-up because it is a symptom that something is wrong. Instead of trying to mask the issue, the likes of osteopaths and chiropractors can help to diagnose the actual problem and prescribe a course of treatment to not only alleviate pain but make improvements in the body that will rectify the underlying issue.

It will hurt: Experienced manual therapists such as osteopaths and chiropractors are highly trained and skilled in their field, able to deliver effective treatments that do not hurt and offer relief to patients. There are some circumstances, such as in cases of acute injury where patients may feel mild discomfort due to pressure on bruising or sore muscles. However, these should never hurt.

The pain may go away but the problem will be back again tomorrow:

Experienced and fully qualified health professionals build their reputation on delivering genuine, tangible results. Perhaps the most crucial part of this is in offering realistic timeframes for improvements and never making false promises to patients. When you attend your initial consultation with an osteopath, chiropractor or any healthcare provider, they will not only help you to understand the nature of the problem you face, but also recommend a course of treatment over a given period of time.

Some issues can be effectively remedied in just a few sessions, some may take months – but most importantly, a professional will not try to win your business by misleading you. To provide patients with extra safeguards and provide real peace of mind, some practitioners even offer money-back guarantees to new patients.

Whether you decide to pursue treatment or not, the most important thing is to seek advice and gain a clearer understanding of your issue. From there you can make an informed decision as to how you would like to proceed.



Private healthcare treatments are expensive: Everybody has a different concept of what is expensive and what is affordable. Like any service provider, chiropractors must charge the fee that they feel is appropriate for the service they deliver.

As a patient, it is your responsibility to think not just about cost but about value for money. £100 spent on something that achieves long-term health benefits represents far better value than £10 spent on something that does nothing.

When it comes to your health, you should consider the value of being pain free, the value of enjoying better sleep, the value of being able to exercise, play a sport or run around with your children. You may even wish to consider how a treatment may give you greater mobility, flexibility and wellbeing into your old age.

It is also worth thinking about the cost of not receiving treatment, such as missing days at work through an injury or the cost of treating a problem in the future when you have left it to worsen. At Milton Chiropractic Clinic we believe it is important for the patient to understand what is the cause of their problem, how long it will take to heal and the associated costs.

When we explain your problem to you, we do this by answering these four questions:

1. What is wrong with you?

2. Can we help?

3. How long will it take?

4. How much will it cost?

Ask yourself if the upfront cost is really a price worth paying.

Don't be afraid to find out: Until you consult with a reputable healthcare provider you will not know how expensive a course of treatment might be or whether it represents value for money. For this reason, you should attend an initial consultation and have a frank, honest discussion with your chiropractor.

While it is impossible to state precisely how long it will take to cure a problem or alleviate pain, they will give you an honest assessment of how long they expect your recovery to take. At this point, you are in a position to decide what's right for you.

I can only follow courses of treatment prescribed by my doctor:

While a GP is quite rightly the first port of call for most people who are suffering from a health concern, there are many cases where they are limited in what they can do. In recent years, GP surgeries have come under increased scrutiny for simply prescribing painkillers to manage problems or referring individuals to surgeons for invasive treatments.

Today, there is a growing argument for the use of non-invasive treatments to get to the root cause of musculoskeletal dysfunction. And just because a GP does not refer you to an osteopath



or chiropractor does not mean that you should ignore their potential to help alleviate pain and improve your wellbeing. In modern Britain, GP surgeries are incredibly stretched and their focus is primarily on their specialist field – medicine.

Seeking advice and guidance from a specialist in biomechanics in the form of an osteopath, chiropractor or physiotherapist can often be much more beneficial.

Alternative healthcare is a waste of time:

Alternative healthcare is an unfortunate term and is frequently used to describe a broad range of different disciplines – some of which are more reputable than others. The correct term regulated, scientifically backed and evidence-based therapies such as osteopathy and chiropractic is complementary healthcare – describing treatments that complement each other with the goal of helping patients to get rid of their pain.

Research has shown that spinal manipulative therapy, for example, is capable of providing significant results for back pain that are supported by the NHS. Currently, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends manual therapy, which includes the kind of manipulation provided by osteopaths and chiropractors, as a proven treatment option for persistent lower back pain and neck pain.

Making the most of your appointments

“ Although, visiting a chiropractor is often a relaxing and reassuring experience, many people feel some trepidation about attending an appointment. This is not unusual but an experienced professional will take steps to put you at ease – both by taking time to chat through your general health, explain how they intend to proceed with treatment and by taking things slowly when it comes to actual manipulations and manual therapy. ”

Millions of people experience “white coat fever” in the UK, whether it be seeing a GP, a dentist, an osteopath or a chiropractor.

If you are one of the people who tends to feel anxious about visiting a health professional, here are a few handy tips to help you feel at ease.

Arrive early and check accessibility:

Turning up to an appointment late or on the last minute can easily add to the stress of a situation. Always give yourself ample time to find the practice (particularly if you don't know exactly where it is) and check the availability of parking in advance. If there isn't a car park attached to your practice of choice, look at where the nearest public car parks are and whether this is a reasonable walking distance for you. If you are in significant pain, it is important that you do not attempt to walk too far in a rush, as this

may cause stress, increase your heart rate and potentially worsen any injury or condition.

Dress comfortably: Wear comfortable, flexible clothing for your appointment with a chiropractor. Although you do not specifically need to wear gym gear, you may need to bend and stretch depending on your health complaint. Wearing tight jeans, a mini-skirt or a suit may inhibit movement and make you feel awkward and impact on the quality of your examination.

Follow instructions: One of the primary reasons people don't see the full benefits of their treatment is that they fail to follow the instructions set by their therapist. Osteopaths and chiropractors will often give patients an exercise plan to improve strength, mobility, flexibility and reduce pain and stiffness. A skilled chiropractor will

tailor exercises to your specific needs, and it is important to follow the regime prescribed as rigorously as you would a course of antibiotics. Fail to do so and you may find that improvements come more slowly.



Ask questions:

There is no such thing as a stupid question and if you are paying for a service from a trained expert you

should never be too shy to ask for an explanation in relation to the treatment you are receiving.

Start by asking what is involved in a course of treatment?

Does your health professional use special equipment to perform scans such as health scans, footscans or Myovision scans?

Do they provide exercise plans, video tutorials or text updates?

Ask how a treatment should improve your health and whether you should adapt your day-to-day habits. And make sure what the outcome should be at the end of a course of treatment.



About Milton Chiropractic Clinic

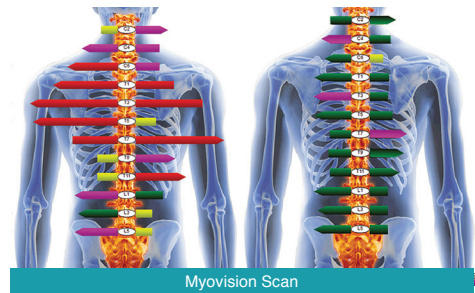


Milton Chiropractic Clinic is a multiple award-winning clinic in Suffolk with a reputation for meeting and exceeding client expectations.

Our examination, diagnoses and treatment solutions combine the best available research with extensive clinical experience and patient preferences.

As the many positive reviews on Google and Facebook demonstrate, the skill and attention to detail we bring to our work helps our patients to not only live a little more comfortably but thrive.

Whether a patient is suffering from back pain, a slipped disc, sciatica, neck pain, shoulder pain or headaches, our treatments are patient-centred. We tailor every single course of treatment to meet an individual's needs and our clientele ranges from babies to the elderly to sporting professionals.



More about Milton Chiropractic

With decades of experience the team at Milton Chiropractic, led by Jasper Hulscher, has treated more than 10,000 patients – most of whom are recommended by word of mouth.

Here's what we offer:

- All chiropractors are registered with the General Chiropractic Council
- All chiropractors are members of the British Chiropractic Association
- **Myovision Scanning** (included in the initial consultation fee)
- **Health Scanning** (included in the initial consultation fee – measuring blood pressure, BMI, body fat, muscle fat, visceral fat and abdominal circumference)
- **Footscan**
- **Shockwave therapy**
- **Extended opening hours** (early, late and Saturday appointments)
- **Free on-site parking**
- **Video exercise tutorials**
- **Recognised by all major insurance companies including BUPA**
- **Automatic appointment reminders via text and email**
- **Direct email access to chiropractors for treatment queries**

The 100% no-risk guarantee

Milton Chiropractic's mission is for patients to receive the care, respect and clinical excellence they deserve. If for some reason a patient is not totally satisfied with the ethical, professional and genuinely caring treatment they receive, the clinic offers a no-quibble, two-week money back guarantee.

Milton Chiropractic is the only clinic in Cambridge to offer a no-quibble, money-back guarantee of this kind to patients.

Milton Chiropractic Clinic

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About Jasper

Jasper grew up in Arnhem, Netherlands. He speaks three languages fluently – Dutch, German and English – and is a keen hockey player, skier and speed skater (although finding somewhere to skate in England often proves difficult).

Jasper first qualified as a physiotherapist in the Netherlands in 1998 and spent the early part of his career working in clinics around the Netherlands and Germany. Jasper moved to the UK to qualify as a chiropractor in 2002, learning his trade in Bournemouth.

After a further stint working in the Netherlands as a chiropractor, Jasper moved back to the UK permanently in 2008 where he established Milton Chiropractic Clinic in 2009 and Farnham

Chiropractic Clinic in 2017. His mission at the clinic is to deliver outstanding patient care, to help them achieve their goals by offering individualised treatments. Jasper is married and the father of two children.

Thank you and good luck!

I hope that you have enjoyed this consumer guide to osteopathy and that you now feel more equipped to approach healthcare providers. Seeking treatment to resolve a problem and improve wellbeing should never be something you sweep under the carpet. And my hope is that if you are reading this, you are inspired to (at the very least) contact the experts, find out more about your condition and explore the options that can improve your quality of life.

Good luck!

Jasper Hulscher

Testimonials

“

If I could give 10 stars I would. If it wasn't for Jasper and his wonderful team I would probably have to give up a job that I love (hairdressing). My daughter would struggle with a sport and job she loves (hairdressing, body building) and my husband wouldn't be dancing around at Christmas parties like a crazy man.

The treatment here is like no other. Very effective no messing around, I've also had acupuncture, which was also very effective. I can't rate them highly enough. A wonderful, professional and very friendly team

Karen Edwards ★★★★★

“

Fantastic treatment. Tailored to my specific needs. Would highly recommend.

Ian Jackson ★★★★★

Testimonials



The clinic is amazing, highly professional, friendly and top class, can't be without them now feel so much better cannot praise them highly enough have tried many other therapists and clinics but they are the best. Thank you.

Helen Starkey ★★★★★



Before I started treatment I had been having headaches at least two-three times a week for over a year, so bad even ibuprofen and paracetamol often could not get rid of them. Now, four months into treatment, I only get headaches maybe once a month (if at all), and they are so light that I hardly notice them!

It's absolutely amazing, the pain was seriously starting to affect my day-to-day activities, to the point that I often had to skip university lectures because I felt too ill; now, I feel like I have been reborn. On top of that, the service is always great, and the receptionists and chiropractors are amazingly friendly and cheerful - I would definitely recommend!

Giulia Federici ★★★★★



After picking up an injury I had been suffering with shoulder & lower back pain for a while, I decided something needed to be done about it. After looking into local Chiropractors I came across this clinic, liked what I read about them and booked an assessment. It was the best decision I'd made in a while!

The staff are friendly and welcoming! After a few weeks of treatment everything has been fixed and realigned. I'm pain free and my movement is even better than what it was before my injuries. Even my golf swing has improved! I have already recommended the clinic to other people & will continue to do so.

Paul Cunnell ★★★★★



I've been going to the clinic for 3 years now and it really has been a lifesaver for me. I have struggled with not only back problems but arm related problems which no one else has been able to treat. Wonderful professional chiropractors and receptionists.

Sarah Davie ★★★★★



Wonderful practice with the best care and the kindest of people!

Caletha Graham Ellis ★★★★★

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