

Selection of discussions drawn from Squandering Billions (Gary Bannerman, Don Nixdorf, D.C.; Hancock House Publishers, 2005 ISBN 0-088839-602-3), pdf files of Sample Chapter and Table of Contents available at www.hancockhouse.com); excerpts from pp 67-68 provided in the paragraphs below offer insightful observations and significant data relating to these issues:

Squandering Billions - Chapter 3, Adverse Events:

The double standard

When there is the slightest hint that any individual health professional, other than a physician — nurse, midwife, physiotherapist, podiatrist, naturopath, dietician, optometrist, pharmacist — has been responsible for a harmful outcome, the medical profession pumps itself up like a Goodyear Blimp with sanctimonious, derogatory judgments. Here is where the Canadian Medical Association, the American Medical Association, and the limitless number of derivative specialized professional organizations attempt to prove how hard they work to protect the public, and why society must give them the powers of a god and the wealth of Midas. The best salvos are saved for chiropractic. This is the profession that poses the greatest threat to their business. Most of the five million Canadians who regularly see a chiropractor had previously been unsatisfied patients of medical doctors, who are consistently unable to successfully treat the neuro-musculoskeletal problems upon which chiropractic education is focused.

The principal battleground chosen by the medical doctors is the subject of neck manipulation, the chiropractic treatment for problems of the upper cervical spine. Millions of patients worldwide have obtained help for whiplash, neck pain, migraine headaches, and ancillary issues stemming from the central nervous system. Some neurologists believe this practice is dangerous and can cause strokes. They suggest that neck manipulation runs the risk of damaging arteries going to the brain, ignoring the fact that chiropractic doctors spend years in training for all the procedures they perform.

Before continuing upon this theme, it should be noted that the most conservative scientific study of chiropractic neck manipulation established that the risk of stroke from the treatment is one out of every 400,000 patients. A study in the October 2, 2001 issue of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* put this risk at one patient in 5.85 million. Contrast that to the facts presented earlier in this chapter — between four and nine out of every 1,000 patients entering an acute care hospital in Canada will die because of a preventable medical mistake. The risk factor for chiropractic neck manipulation shows that it is safer than taking Aspirin. The risk of stroke caused by birth control pills is one in 24,000. This means the birth control pill is from 16 to 240 times more dangerous than chiropractic neck manipulation.

Other scientific studies have documented the high rate of deaths and disabilities that result from common medical procedures, including a one out of 200 mortality rate for laminectomies and a two in 100 mortality rate for spinal fusions. One out of every 145 cervical neck surgery procedures end in death. And in a study of 1,000 workers' compensation patients who received lumbar fusions, 71 percent of single-operation patients had not returned to work four years after their operation, and 95 percent of multiple-operation patients had not returned to work. They remain disabled.

No one in the chiropractic profession has ever denied the potential risk associated with the procedure and ethics require the patient to be fully informed. Strokes have occurred. There are many risk factors for stroke including blood clotting problems, hypertension, smoking, high cholesterol, use of birth control pills, heart disease, and trauma such as sport injuries or blows to the head from an accident. All carry a greater degree of risk than spinal adjustment. Strokes or stroke-like symptoms are also associated with many normal everyday activities such as cradling a phone between your ear and shoulder during a prolonged conversation, having your hair washed at a beauty salon, dental procedures, painting a ceiling, and turning your head while driving. They can also occur spontaneously in some people for no apparent reason. The physicians' routine approaches are far more threatening. Death as a result of long-term use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as Aspirin, Naproxen, Ibuprofen, or Motrin is one in 1,200 persons. Surgeries for neck and back pain cause 15,600 cases of paralysis or stroke and 700 deaths per million.