

Signalling from the Spine

The human spine is an extremely important, intricate but at the same time, robust structure. Total body structure wellbeing function depends on a healthy spine. There is no such thing as a surgical “spinal replacement” like exists with other joint structures like hips or knees, so you have to look after the spine you have. A single spine consists of dozens of joints, and its workings are far more than a collection of vertebrae stacked on top of each other. Indeed, most of your spine’s strength comes not from the bone, but the control of the muscles used to stabilise and position it from moment to moment as you go about your daily tasks.



Dr Tat Loo: Chiropractor

appropriate muscle control can be harmful, not helpful. The question here is not about raw strength, it is about nervous system signalling. This is my focus as a chiropractor. Specifically, you want to know if the nervous system (especially the brain) is talking to your spine correctly, and is your spine in return providing the nervous system with the right information for it to do its job of monitoring and control.

What kind of information does the nervous system need from the joints of the spine? We are talking about information which keeps your brain up-to-date with what is happening; where weight and load is being placed on the spine, at which level and which direction. The movement and speed of movement of the spine, in each area from top to bottom. How much all of these factors are changing – is the load getting heavier, is the speed of movement getting faster? Any confusion or misinterpretation in these signals as they travel between the spine and the brain and the scene is set for a problem in terms of back pain, stiffness, nerve sensation changes, weakness or other spinal dysfunction.

If you feel these issues may be affecting you, or you simply want to maintain great spinal and body structure wellbeing for the long term, talk to your BodyMind & Spine chiropractor.

Weak back muscles can sometimes be a contributor to back problems and spinal pain. But more important than raw back muscle strength is how well those back-muscles are co-ordinated – turned on and off at the right time and the right sequence – by the nervous system. Because muscle strength without

This content reflects personal opinions of Dr Tat Loo, a Dunedin-based chiropractor.

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