

# Back to Health

Colorado Chiropractic Association  
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CA • A Publication



## Explore the History of Chiropractic

*October is Chiropractic Awareness Month*

Learn the story about chiropractic – the world's most popular, surgery-free, drug-free, natural health care system. This effective, safe approach to whole body health care is now over 100 years old and continues to help people of all ages live active, happy lives. What's the story? Read on!

### Magnetic Healers

The profession of chiropractic began in the United States in 1895. Daniel David (D.D.) Palmer is credited with performing the first specific, spinal adjustment. He went on to develop the philosophy, science, and art of chiropractic care that still exists. Palmer studied the work of early "magnetic" healers, a common therapy of the time. Magnetic healers used energy from their hands to "charge up" a patient.

### Deafness Defeated

The story of the first chiropractic adjustment stars a janitor named Harvey Lillard.

Lillard had lost his hearing after an accident and was deaf for 17 years.

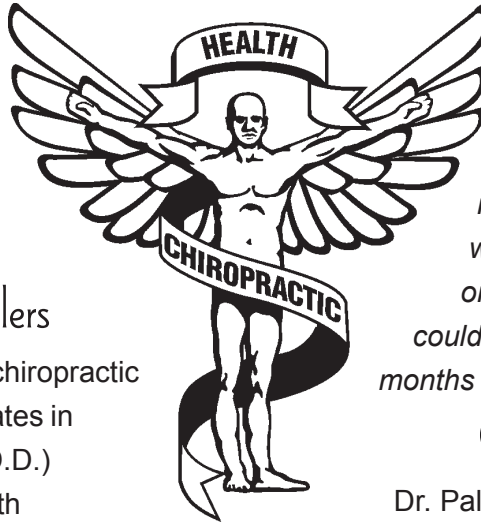
Palmer examined Lillard and found a vertebrae in his spine was out of place. In 1895, after performing an adjustment to his spine, Lillard regained his hearing. Lillard said,

*"I was deaf 17 years and expected to always remain so, for I had doctored a great deal without any benefit. I had long ago made up my mind not to take any more ear treatments, for it did me no good. Last January, Dr. Palmer told me that my deafness came from an injury in my spine. This was new to me, but, it is a fact that my back was injured at the time I went deaf. Dr. Palmer treated me on the spine; in two treatments I could hear quite well. That was eight months ago. My hearing remains good."*

### Chiropractic Rules!

Dr. Palmer was besieged with patients after treating Lillard. Patients came to him with complaints from migraine headaches and flu to epilepsy and heart trouble. Each of these conditions responded well to Dr. Palmer's adjustments, which he called "hand treatments." Often surprised by how effective his treatments were, Dr. Palmer continued to study anatomy and physiology to learn more about the connection between the spine and good health. He discovered that spinal adjustments correct misalignments, or subluxations, in the spine, allowing nerves to function properly and eliminating the patient's complaints. He later created the term

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before duplicating.*

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"chiropractic" from the Greek words "chiro" meaning hand and "practic" meaning practice or operation. Renaming his clinic the Palmer School & Infirmary of Chiropractic, Dr. Palmer began accepting students in 1898.

## Chiropractic Naysayers

Even though Dr. Palmer's treatments were successful and helpful to many people, critics attacked him with labels of "charlatan" and "magnetism crank." The traditional medical community, perhaps jealous of his success and/or upset by their own failure to successfully treat difficult cases, began a crusade to stop Dr. Palmer. They wrote letters to local newspapers openly condemning Dr. Palmer's methods and accusing him of practicing medicine without a license. Dr. Palmer presented arguments against the medical procedures of surgery and vaccination and cautioned against the use of drugs, stating that drugs were often unnecessary and even harmful or deadly. In 1905, Dr. Palmer was sentenced to 105 days in jail and a \$350 fine for practicing medicine without a license. Many other chiropractors were also unfairly jailed over the next 50 years.

Dr. Palmer's son B.J. Palmer continued his father's work, further refining and defining the practice of chiropractic into a safe, effective, and unique health care system. Dr. B.J. Palmer was instrumental in securing recognition for chiropractic as a licensed profession.

## Chiropractic Today

Chiropractic care has advanced immensely since 1895. Palmer Chiropractic College still thrives in Davenport, Iowa and has branched out to two other locations in California and Florida. In addition, there are currently 15 other accredited chiropractic colleges in the United States. Chiropractic is a licensed health care profession in all fifty states and is covered by many insurance plans nationwide. Currently in the United States, there are over 66,000 licensed chiropractors practicing this safe, effective, drug-free, surgery-free system of optimum health and wellness. ■

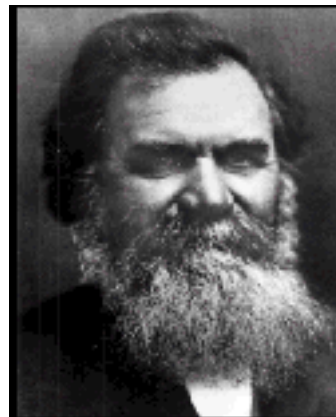
# Chiropractic Photo Gallery



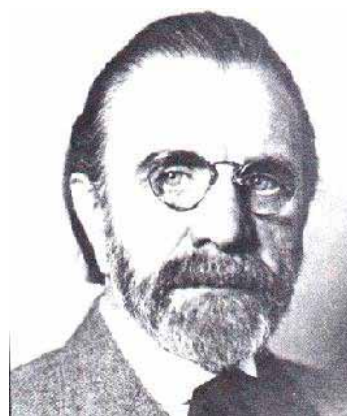
This image of the magnetic healer was popular in the late 19th century, when D.D. Palmer began his practice.

Source: Joseph Keating Jr., PhD  
*Dynamic Chiropractic*

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Dr. Daniel David (D.D.) Palmer  
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Dr. Barlett Joshua (B.J.) Palmer  
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