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Older American Utilization of Chiropractic Care

*Persons 65 Years and Older

By Mark Studin | December 2010

According to the US Census Bureau (n.d.), the population in 2008 of persons over the age of 65 was 36,800,000. This represents a significant percentage of the total population and with the "baby-boomers" aging, the number is increasing yearly. As we get older, our bodies start to "break down" and experience signs of "wear and tear" along with other problems. The signs of "wear and tear" are called degenerative joint disease, spondylosis or arthritis as they all mean the same thing. In addition, we get accentuated curves in our spines either from side to side or forward and are both a form of scoliosis and are both unsightly and cause many other problems.

Many of these maladies can either be prevented or mitigated with regular exercise and/or chiropractic care throughout our lives to re-align the spine so that it stays straight. However, once we get older, many of these maladies have a side effect of pain and/or loss of function. In response to this, many older Americans seek solutions to improve function and reduce pain.

One solution that many Americans take is chiropractic care because it is a safe and effective means toward accomplishing the goals of getting well. As far back as 1993, according to Mange, Angus, Papadopoulos, and Swan, chiropractic was deemed safe and effective. This continues to 2010 where the safety of chiropractic was questioned regarding risks of stroke have been also been proven statistically rare with chiropractic care; therefore certifying chiropractic safe

Weigel et al. (2010) reported that from 1993-2007 there were 14.6% Americans using chiropractic based on respondents in the Survey on Assets and Health Dynamics Among the Oldest Old (AHEAD) and their Medicare claims. Based upon the 2008 census report, that would be 5,372, 800 older American using chiropractic. In addition to the Medicare report, there are also countless others under chiropractic care who choose not to go through the Medicare system. The conclusion is a simple metric; older Americans are choosing a drugless solution to their problems and utilizing chiropractic care.