

CHIROPRACTOR

Entry Level: Doctoral or professional degree

***Please note:** BYU has additional information on this field and its requirements:

<https://ppa.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/ChiropracticInformation.pdf> and <https://ppa.byu.edu/chiropractic>.

Chiropractors use hands-on spinal manipulation and other alternative treatments, the theory being that proper alignment of the body's musculoskeletal structure, particularly the spine, will enable the body to heal itself without surgery or medication.⁵

JOB REQUIREMENTS

What is the exact job title?

- Chiropractor

How do I become one?

- Acquire 4 years of pre-medical undergraduate college education.³
- Earn a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) degree.³
 - Apply for and attend an accredited chiropractic college (a 4 or 5-year program is typical).³
- Pass the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) exam.³
- Take continuing education classes to maintain chiropractic license.¹

What qualities do I need?

- Decision-making skills: Chiropractors must determine the best course of action when treating a patient. They must also decide when to refer patients to other healthcare professionals.¹
- Detail oriented: Chiropractors must be observant and pay attention to details so that they can make proper diagnoses and avoid mistakes that could harm patients.¹
- Dexterity: Because they use their hands to perform manual adjustments to the spine and other joints, chiropractors should have good coordination to perform therapy effectively.¹
- Empathy: Chiropractors often care for people who are in pain. They must be understanding and sympathetic to their patients' problems and needs.¹
- Interpersonal skills: Chiropractors must be personable in order to keep clients coming to their practice. Also, because chiropractors frequently touch patients in performing therapy, they should be able to put their patients at ease.¹
- Organizational skills: Self-employed chiropractors may need to schedule appointments, manage employees, bill insurance companies, and maintain patients' files. Good recordkeeping and other organizational skills are critical in running a successful business.¹

TYPICAL WORK DAY

What do they do?

- Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine (DCs or DCMs) are best known for their main therapeutic activity: manipulating the spinal column of patients with various health problems in order to correct imbalances. Chiropractic is a holistic health-care approach, which means that it's based

1<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/chiropractors.htm>

2<https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Chiropractor/Salary>

3<https://www.acatoday.org/Patients/Why-Choose-Chiropractic/Chiropractic-Qualifications>

4<http://www.exercise-science-guide.com/blog/what-can-you-do-with-exercise-science-degree/>

5<https://www.webmd.com/pain-management/guide/chiropractic-pain-relief#1>

upon the idea that good health depends on a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional factors. As the benefits of holistic medicine are recognized, chiropractic is starting to be more accepted as a legitimate health-care practice.⁴

- Given their holistic approach, it's no surprise that chiropractors do much more than straighten spines. They also use water, light, electricity, heat, massage, and ultrasound when treating patients. And the treatment doesn't always stop when patients leave the office. They may take with them advice on healthy eating, exercise, and stress-management habits. DCs may specialize in particular areas of treatment, including nutrition, internal disorders, orthopedics, neurology, and sports injuries.⁴
- Chiropractors treat patients with health problems of the neuromusculoskeletal system, which includes nerves, bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons. They use spinal adjustments and manipulation, as well as other clinical interventions, to manage patients' health concerns, such as back and neck pain.¹

Where do they normally work?

- Most chiropractors work in a solo or group chiropractic practice. A large number are self-employed.¹

What hours do they work?

- Most chiropractors work full time. Chiropractors may work in the evenings or on weekends to accommodate patients. Some chiropractors travel to patients' homes to give treatment. Self-employed chiropractors set their own hours.¹

BENEFITS

What is a typical salary in this field?

- BLS: In May 2018, median pay was \$34.33/hour or \$71,410/year.¹
- Payscale: \$31.76/hour or \$60,748/year.²

Does this job come with any benefits? (vision, dental, 401k, PTO, etc.)

- Medical: 33%²
- Vision: 12%²
- Dental: 16%²
- None: 66%²

GROWTH

What is the projected job growth?

- Between 2018 - 2028, job growth is projected to be 7%.¹

Last Updated: October 2019

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