

Princeton Chiropractic Wellness Center

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Heart Rate Variability and Chiropractic Care

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Heart Rate Variability (HRV) is the slight variation in intervals between heartbeats. It may seem counterintuitive, but your heartbeat should NOT beat at perfectly regular intervals. There should be little variations in the times between each beat. It would be like driving your car down a straight road and holding the steering wheel completely still. If you weren't making those slight adjustments to the steering wheel for bumps, wind, etc., eventually you would drive off the road. Your heart has to continuously have its beat adjusted to help you adapt to changes in body position, altering blood flow to different parts of the body, and for just regulating your blood pressure. These adjustments are controlled by the nervous system.

Heart Rate Variability (HRV) has been studied for almost 30 years by a many high level medical groups.¹⁻³ It has been researched and shown to be a strong indicator of heart health, digestive health, emotional health, improved ability to handle stress, athletic training and fitness, and improved healing ability in general.⁴⁻¹⁰ The National Institutes of Health (NIH), Mayo Clinic, Stanford University Hospital and Clinics, and Mount Sinai Medical Center and School of Medicine are among the many prestigious research centers studying HRV and using it in clinical practice.^{11, 12} Clinical research has shown that when HRV levels are high, a person has a greater resiliency to stress.¹³ When HRV levels are low, the person's resiliency to stress is also low.¹³ This is because the more adaptable we are, the more capable we are of dealing with life's inevitable stressors. This adaptability is directly controlled by our nervous system and can be measured, using HRV as an indicator.¹⁴⁻¹⁹ This is why so many studies are showing that chiropractic care not only improves heart rate variability, but that it also improves a patient's overall level of health looking at a variety of health outcome measures.¹⁴⁻¹⁹

In our office we will now be periodically monitoring our patient's HRV to help us ensure that they are not only feeling better but growing stronger and healthier as well.

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