

Backbone Chiropractic Newsletter

SUMMER

2009

From Dr. Batdorf

I am amazed at how many people do not know what their insurance coverage is. Your insurance policy is just that — yours. It is therefore

your responsibility to know what the insurance covers and does not cover. That being said, the insurance companies are not much help

because their publications and letters often require a PhD to decipher. Then try to get a human being on the phone to help you?! Good luck!

Medical Bills Cause Most Bankruptcies

According to a June 2009 study published in the *American Journal of Medicine* nearly two out of three bankruptcies stem from medical bills, and even people *with* health insurance face financial disaster if they experience a serious illness. The data was collected from a random survey of bankruptcy filers during early 2007. According to the information collected, medical problems contributed to 62.1% of all bankruptcies. When compared to previous studies they found that between 2001 and 2007 the proportion of all bankruptcies attributable to medical problems rose by about 50%.

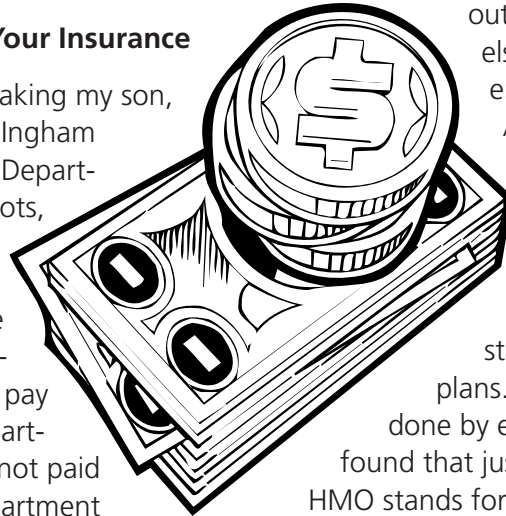
Among families who were bankrupted by illness, those with private insurance reported average medical bills of \$17,749 compared to those who were uninsured, who faced an average of \$26,971. Sadly, this

study underestimates the full scope of this problem because the data was collected before our current economic crisis.

Deciphering Your Insurance

After recently taking my son, Auggie, to the Ingham County Health Department for his shots, I was made aware that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan would not pay the Health Department and had not paid the Health Department for any of his previous shots because there was not a doctor's name on the bill. After a lengthy phone call I found this was due to a change in Blue Cross's policy. The

question that came to my mind is, "I am a health professional who knows the ins and outs of health care — If I can't figure it out, how can anyone else?" And apparently that is the case. According to a 2009 McKinsey & Co. survey, just half of consumers feel strongly that they understand their health plans. Another survey done by eHealth Inc. in 2007 found that just 37% knew that HMO stands for "health maintenance organization," and that only 35% were very sure of their own plan's maximum out-of-pocket charges.



Thank you for your referrals. My business is based on them and they are your greatest compliment to my office. To show my appreciation share this newsletter with a friend who needs chiropractic and they will receive a **free consult and exam.**

Backbone Chiropractic, LLC and Massage Therapy

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Office hours: Mon. – Fri. 11:00 am – 6:00 pm ■ Saturday by appointment only

Toothpick Acupuncture

Researchers at the Group Health Center for Health Studies in Seattle, found that “fake” acupuncture using toothpicks instead of needles was as effective as the traditional Chinese health method for relieving back pain. The study consisted of 638 patients with chronic low back pain, none of whom had ever had acupuncture, and gave them three different acupuncture treatments. One group received individualized care in the classic style of Chinese medicine by analyzing the patients — feeling the pulse, looking at the tongue, studying the body and lifestyle — to design a customized set of points that would most likely help the patient’s specific condition. The second group received acupuncture at standardized points, which experienced practitioners agree can help the majority of back-pain sufferers. The third group received the same treatment as the second

group, only with toothpicks instead of needles. There were some patients that were told to just continue doing what they had been doing for low back pain, that functioned as the control group.

The acupuncture patients received ten treatments over seven weeks. After eight weeks, all of the acupuncture patients — including the sham patients — reported improvements in their ability to function

(going up and down stairs and walking) as compared to the control group.

A year after the treatments, all of the acupuncture patients averaged 63% improvement in pain relief, compared to just 50% in the control group. The

bottom line for (back pain) patients is — toothpicks or no toothpicks — if you are not responding to standard care, then acupuncture may be a viable option for you.

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Chinese symbol for health

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