

## TAYLOR: Doctor encourages chiropractic care to be started at birth



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By Lisa Vidaurri-Bowling

TAYLOR — Love introduced Dr. Joseph Belcher to the world of chiropractic care.

At the time, the then-18-year-old was dating his high school sweetheart and uncertain of what he wanted to do with his life.

Belcher graduated from Southgate High School in 1968 and attended Ferris State and Wayne State universities before being introduced to Dr. Claire O'Dell, a chiropractor with an office in Southgate.

"My girlfriend had started working for Dr. O'Dell and she began telling me about all of these things that were going on with people getting well, not just with backaches and neck aches, but with diabetes, heart problems and kidney problems," Belcher said.

"Mothers who could not conceive were conceiving. I listened and thought, 'Yeah, right.' All of a sudden, she comes up with this crazy idea that she is going to marry a chiropractor one day."

Belcher, 59, said it was then that he realized he'd better investigate the chiropractic profession a little deeper.

A meeting with O'Dell convinced Belcher that the body heals itself when it is given the tools it needs for healing, such as proper nutrition, rest, exercise, mental and spiritual balance, and a nervous system that is working properly.

Two months later, he was enrolled in chiropractic school. Belcher graduated from Logan College of Chiropractic in Chesterfield, Mo., in 1974.

He worked with O'Dell's son-in-law in Ypsilanti before starting his Taylor practice.

"She did marry a chiropractor," Belcher said. "Dr. O'Dell yells at me for stealing his receptionist. We got married at Logan College of Chiropractic in 1972, and we have two kids now."

The Belchers are Grosse Ile residents and have a son, Joseph Jr., and a daughter, Dr. Jennifer Simpson, a chiropractor with a practice she shares with her husband, Dr. William Simpson.

Belcher estimated that he sees about 250 patients per week in an office he used to share with his daughter and son-in-law.

In November, the Simpsons opened a practice in Dexter.

Belcher said chiropractors correct interference in the nervous system by using specific adjustments, leading to better joint function, muscle balance and nerve function.

“Chiropractic care should be started at birth,” he said. “I delivered both of my children at home. My daughter was adjusted when she was 20 minutes old.”

His son was adjusted just minutes after birth.

Belcher recalled when Joseph Jr. was 3 or 4 years old and ill with a high fever, and his wife contemplated a trip to a hospital.

“I came home from work, took his pajamas off, gave him two or three adjustments and, within a half- hour, the high fever broke and, within an hour and a half, he wasn’t running around, but he was walking around,” he said. “Chiropractic works on kids, and a lot of times it works fast.”

Like his children, Belcher’s grandchildren have been receiving chiropractic care since birth.

When it comes to adjustments, Belcher uses an activator instrument. It’s a method he started using 25 years ago.

The small adjusting instrument delivers a precisely measured, gentle thrust in a specific direction.

“It’s different than the manipulation,” Belcher said. “It’s a handheld instrument that has different settings for different forces. It’s just a matter of light pressure with little babies.

“The birth process can be a traumatic situation. They used to use forceps a lot, where they’d put the clamp on the head and pull the baby out and twist and turn.

“Now they don’t use those as much, but a lot of times they use the hands and grab hold of the baby’s neck and pull and turn. The neck’s never had any stress or pull on it; now, all of a sudden, (it) has this torque.”

Belcher said what often will happen is that the vertebrae will get out of place, causing the nervous system to work improperly.

He said depending on where the nerves go, the imbalance can lead to all sorts of issues, such as allergies, asthma, reflux and colic.

“The point is to maintain health for your whole life, not to abuse/ignore your body for decades and then put out fires when you are in physical distress,” he wrote on his Web site, [www.belcherchiropractic.com](http://www.belcherchiropractic.com). “The spine and nervous system is subject to trauma from day one until death — twisting of the neck during the birth process; falling while learning to walk ... poor posture; driving; sitting all day; inadequate exercise; gravity; stress; chemical interactions. It is never too early or too late to start chiropractic wellness care.

“The body heals itself when it is given the tools it needs for healing. Nerves control the immune system, skeletal system, respiratory system, reproductive system, digestive system, hormone (endocrine) system, and the list goes on.

“As a chiropractor, I remove the interference to the nervous system and get out of the way. I allow the body to do what it is innately supposed to do when the channels of communication are clear. Chiropractors do not cure anything. The body cures itself if allowed to do so.”

Belcher is quick to point out that healing takes time.

“It depends on your personal history, genetics, current physical condition, level of stress and how well you follow the chiropractic recommendation,” he said.

Along with spinal adjustments on Tuesday mornings, Belcher uses nutrition response testing in his practice. The noninvasive system analyzes the body through muscle testing to determine the underlying causes of health issues.

Belcher said that the initial state of chiropractic care is designed to reduce inflammation and restore joint mobility as quickly as the body will allow, which often explains frequent visits in the beginning.

Wellness care is designed to further the healing process and maintain the progress the body has made.

In the 35 years he has practiced, Belcher said he has realized that his responsibilities are to be the best technician,

educator and communicator for his patients.

“There are two ways to remain healthy,” he said. “One is to keep your brain and your body connected, and the other is a healthy lifestyle. Eat good — more organic — and drink a lot of water. Exercise and keep a good mental attitude, whether it’s prayer time or meditation time. All of these things are a healthy lifestyle, and with a good nervous system, you’ve got a good chance of getting through life healthy.”

And it’s love for his patients that Belcher attributes to his success.

“It’s the love and caring for my patients and wanting them to live the best they can live,” he said. “It’s watching people change when you get all the pressure off the nerves. When they pay their bill, that’s fine; but when they say, ‘You know what, doc? You’ve really changed my life,’ that’s the best payment in the world.”

**Belcher Chiropractic Center**

**Location: 14024 Pelham Road, Taylor; 1-313-291-6710.**

**Owner: Dr. Joseph Belcher of Grosse Ile.**

**Years of experience: 35.**

**Services: Chiropractic care.**

**Hours: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 7 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays.**

**Appointments: Preferred, but walk-ins are accepted.**

**Web site: [www.belcherchiropractic.com](http://www.belcherchiropractic.com).**