



# CLIFTON NEWSLETTER

## AUTUMN 2023

### Your Practice Manager

Dom Heller

I'm always available to answer your questions. Please feel free to contact me:

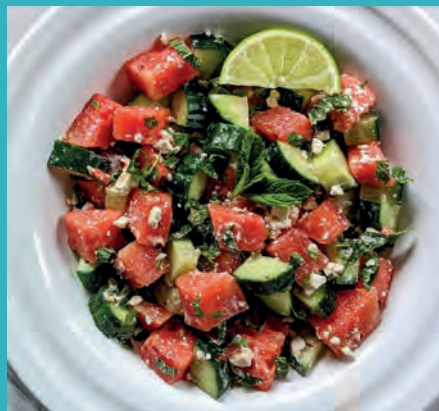
✉ [dominic.heller@willowlife.co.uk](mailto:dominic.heller@willowlife.co.uk)



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### HIGHLIGHTS



## How healthy is your child's spine?

As parents, we do all we can to prioritise our children's health and well-being. We strive to build a nurturing environment to help them reach their full potential. However, one crucial aspect often overlooked is spinal health. A healthy spine is essential for overall development and long-term well-being. We want our kids to be healthy, but the problem is, spinal health issues often go unnoticed until they reach adult hood. Whether this be through childbirth or accidents, **children's spines have problems too**. This can lead to long-term issues if not addressed early in life.



So here's some helpful tips to help you look after your children's spine:

### 1. Teach Them Correct Posture

They won't know what good posture is until you show them. Remind them to sit and stand up straight, keeping their shoulders back and their heads aligned with their spines. Avoiding slouching and hunching over devices can prevent unnecessary strain on the spine. Instead of looking down, teach them to raise the phone or tablet to eye level.

### 2. Backpack Awareness

Help them choose a backpack that is comfortable and appropriately sized. Ensure they wear two padded straps to distribute the weight evenly across their shoulders and back. A heavy backpack slung over one shoulder can lead to imbalances and strain on the spine. Make sure they only carry 10-15% of their body weight on their backs.

### 3. Provide Healthy Sleep Surface and Position

A firm, spine-friendly mattress will set your child up for success during the day. Not only will they sleep better, but it will also improve their posture throughout the night. If they sleep on their back, suggest that they keep a pillow underneath their knees. If they sleep on their side,

place a pillow between their knees while they sleep. Never encourage them to sleep on their tummy!

#### 4. Active Lifestyle

Promote physical activity and regular exercise. Engaging in activities such as swimming, yoga, and pilates can help strengthen core muscles that support the spine. Sports and outdoor play also contribute to overall spinal health, promote brain development, focus, social skills, and immune response. Another way to improve their overall health is by making them stretch regularly. When combined with chiropractic care, you've got a winning pair.

#### 5. Promote Clean, Healthy Foods

Nutrition plays an important role in our children's health. Eating healthy, clean foods will provide them with the needed nutrients for growth, cognitive function, and a strong immune system. Focus on nutrient-dense foods, hydration, and reducing processed sugars and unhealthy fats. While perfection is challenging, aim for a balance of 80/20, where consistency and long-term commitment to healthy eating habits offer significant benefits.

In conclusion, nurturing a healthy spine in children includes **a combination of education, lifestyle changes and awareness**. By creating **good habits early on**, you can set the foundation for a lifetime of strong spinal health. Taking action now may ensure that they have a **healthy spine throughout their adult hood**. Kids who have healthy spines grow to be adults who have healthy spines, and are less likely to have back pain, neck pain, spinal issues etc. Children who have unhealthy spines, with issues that go unaddressed, **will not grow into adults with healthy spines**.

**Bring your children in for a free spinal check. It's free if you're a current patient.**



- By Dr Nicole

## A little bit about me

“Throughout my life, I struggled with back issues due to scoliosis. Experiencing the transformative power of chiropractic first-hand, I decided to become a chiropractor myself. My vision is for a community full of vibrant and healthier people who are able to do the things they love to do. It brings me joy to care for individuals at every stage of life, and by introducing them to the principles of natural health and the chiropractic lifestyle, I strive to help them experience a better quality of life.”

# Heal With Food

## **If you are not eating healthily, you will not heal as quickly.**

You would have already heard us talk about the importance of drinking water after adjustments, and the **vital role of hydration in overall spinal and nervous system health and function**. But there are plentiful other reasons to make optimal hydration a top priority if you want to feel, function, and look your best! Eating healthy anti-inflammatory food is another way to **support your recovery so that you get well quicker**. Eating unhealthy foods can lead to low energy, slow or poor digestion, headaches, skin issues, muscle cramps or weakness, **reduced mental and physical performance**, increased cravings for processed foods, and even impair our immune system!

Here are some helpful, and practical ways to stay well hydrated. This hopefully paints a picture of why we should keep H2O front of mind when it comes to building and maintaining healthy habits.

**1) Include plenty of fresh (or frozen) fruits and vegetables** - Water intake doesn't just need to come from drinks. Regularly consuming foods with a high water intake all contribute too. Some of the best sources include melon, strawberries, peaches, oranges, cucumber, bell peppers, cauliflower, courgette, celery, lettuce, and cabbage.

**2) Soups, salads and smoothies** - A daily soup, salad, or smoothie will effortlessly help you pack in a variety of the foods listed above! Smoothie bases made of water, milk, nut milk, or coconut water will top up your total intake, as well as stocks used in soups or stews.

**3) Add in electrolytes or a good quality mineral salt** - good hydration also means having a balance of essential minerals; sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium. Consider adding in electrolytes or a pinch of good quality pink or sea salt to a glass of water or two, especially if you are active, regularly workout, or during warmer weather, as the minerals lost in sweat need replacing.

**4) Get creative with flavours** - Add a burst of flavour to water using ingredients such as lemon, lime, cucumber, orange, grapefruit, and mint to make it more enjoyable. Or, if you prefer to quench your thirst from hot beverages, opt for some herbal teas. Mint, turmeric, and rooibos are my favourite caffeine free options but find any that suit your tastes.

### **Extra tips**

- Invest in a good quality reusable water bottle! Stainless steel will be best for keeping liquids hot or cold as wanted.
- If you have trouble remembering to drink regularly throughout the day try setting a reminder on your phone or watch at regular intervals.
- Leave out a glass ready for the morning in an obvious place, to drink first thing, as we always wake up a little dehydrated.

# Watermelon salad recipe

This simple recipe makes the most refreshing salad, hitting the perfect balance of a sweet, salty, and slightly spicy crunch! Perfect for doubling up and feeding a crowd as a side, but where it does have a high water content it is best enjoyed on the day and made up just before or close to serving.

## Ingredients

- 1/4 large or 1/2 small/baby watermelon
- 1 large cucumber (or 2 small)
- 1/4 cup fresh mint and basil
- 1/2 cup feta
- Optional; very finely cut jalapeños
- 1/3 tsp salt
- 1-2 TBSP Olive oil
- Juice and zest of 1 lime

## Method

1. Cut up the watermelon and cucumber into similar bite size pieces and add to a large bowl.
2. Roughly chop the fresh herbs, and finely slice the jalapeños if using.
3. Combine all of the above together with crumbled feta, lime zest and juice, olive oil, and salt.
4. Great served alongside any grilled or roasted meats, fish, or veggie burgers!

*By Haidee Harvey-Brown - Chiropractic Assistant*



*Haidee Harvey-Brown -  
Chiropractic Assistant*

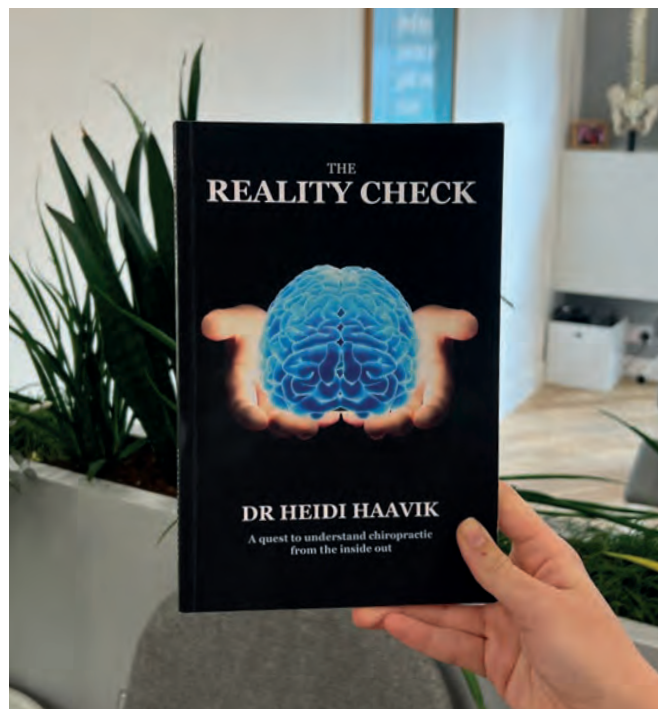


# Our Book Recommendations

## The Reality Check

**Have you ever wondered why people are less stable as they age? Why it's easier to have trips and falls as you get older?**

Well, Dr. Heidi Haavik's book 'The Reality Check' explains the part that **proprioception plays in balance**. As we get older, our coordination is reduced and our balance is off, so it's easier for us to fall over and drop things. So what's proprioception? Proprioception is the body's ability to sense movement, action and location. In other words, **it's your body knowing where your body parts are**. One of the reasons that this reduces over time is because of the health of our nervous system. The impacts of spinal health on our nervous system is an important element to consider as we age over time.



Proprioception is present in every muscle movement you have. **Without it, you wouldn't be able to move without thinking about your next step consciously**, which is not only inefficient but demanding on our brains. The most extreme example of this would be someone who's had a stroke, and their ability to move efficiently is compromised due to injury to the brain.

However, if you have poor spinal health and your nervous system is not functioning at its best, that can impact your proprioception **particularly as you age**. Dr. Heidi also explains the concepts in a really **easy to understand language** that will give you a better understanding of how working with chiropractic, you're able to not only protect but improve your proprioception. She uses very simple analogies to help you to digest some quite complicated concepts. If you have a curious mind, you can delve deeper into the literature...

Another interesting point made by Dr. Heidi is how the **chiropractic adjustment can lead to your muscles miraculously feeling stronger in an instant**. It is believed that by adjusting vertebral subluxations, we can change the way that your brain sends messages to your muscles. **Feeling stronger is a typical result of the muscle receiving clearer messages from the brain**, which makes it easier to perform a stronger contraction of the muscle than before. If you're interested in finding out more about how proprioception plays a part in your balance and movement as you age, then this is a great read for you.

## - This months book recommendation was by Dr Ryan



## A little bit about Ryan

*"My patients come to me because they can't live the life that they want to live. There is no greater privilege than to be able to apply what I've learned to help them get out of pain and get back to the life that they want to live. I understand what it's like to suffer. As a rugby player. I experienced a number of injuries, and it became clear to me that caring for my body was essential for me to be able to play well and enjoy a good quality of life. I was so inspired by the impact that chiropractic had on me that I felt compelled to study chiropractic, so that I could help people in the way that it helped me.*

**I'm so fortunate to have been a chiropractor for the last eight years and it brings me great joy to share my knowledge and skills and the important message of looking after your body."**

# Ashton Court





# Clifton Walk Of The Month

## Calling all proud Bristolians!

**This walk was recommended by Teigan, our lovely Chiropractic Assistant.**



**Teigan -  
Chiropractic Assistant**

*“Ashton court features an enormous stately home once owned by the Smyth family, today Ashton court is a beautiful historic park with a whopping 850 acres of land with a refreshing mix of both grassland and woodland. It’s just a ten minute drive from Bristol city centre located in Long Ashton. One of the nicest things about Ashton court is being able to observe the wildlife as you wander the grounds. If you’re lucky you just might get to see the deer grazing as Ashton Court has been a deer park for little over 600 hundred years! If all of that walking tires you out you can stop off in the cafe and enjoy some local homemade cakes, sandwiches and drinks.”*

Most of the estate lies within North Somerset, but it has been owned by Bristol City Council since the 1950s. On the walk, you may spot a beautiful variety of flowers including yellow rattle, knapweed, buttercups, Common Spotted Orchids and Green Winged Orchids.

### **Things to know:**

- There’s a café available at Ashton Court Estate, or you could check out The Ashton, at Ashton Road. This pub has had a mixture of fortunes over the years, having been a Harvester initially, and then being damaged by fire. The pub is currently running as an independent business.
- The estate is open Monday to Sunday from 8am. Closing times are different throughout the year.
- If you’re bringing your dog, make sure to keep them on a short lead and stay on the mown and marked paths.
- There isn’t free parking on these premises.

### **For more information, head to:**

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/museums-parks-sports-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-and-estates/ashton-court-estate>



## Dr Alex' Recommendation - A New Habit

### Pain Is The 6th & Final Warning, Not The 1st

While the movie Titanic is hailed as a cinematic masterpiece, it harbors a lesser-known fact... did you know that the ship received a total of six warnings about sea ice before its tragic sinking? Today, documentaries often highlight the ship's inability to turn quickly, but the critical lesson lies in how early they detected the iceberg and acted upon those warnings. What if they had reacted to that very first warning?

Through my years of chiropractic practice, I've come to realise that "pain" is the sixth and final warning sign, not the first or second. Contrary to popular belief, pain is not our primary focus. Rather, it serves as a messenger, attempting to communicate something beyond the mere presence of a problem. But what does it truly reveal? Does the word "pain" adequately convey how much your body has endured or how hard you've striven to keep moving forward? No, it doesn't.

Now, you might be wondering, what is the first sign? Is it the tension in your body, the persistent poor posture your partner mentions, or the enduring fatigue even after striving for a full eight hours of sleep? Yes, these are indeed early signs worth noting, but they aren't the very first. The initial warning sign is something seemingly mundane: too much sitting. While the medical community doesn't always reach a consensus, the NHS, CDC, Mayo Clinic, and the British Journal of General Practice all concur on this: sitting is the new smoking. Beyond the more obvious risks of cardiovascular diseases, excessive sitting restricts circulation, slows metabolism, and encourages muscle and bone deterioration. This ultimately leads to rounded shoulders, a hunched posture, and the potential for slipped discs and degeneration.

Do you recall our discussion during your consultation when there were no reported injuries, traumas, or accidents to your mid-back? Yet, you were plagued by stiffness, tightness, aches, and pains in that area. Sitting is sitting, and immobilisation is immobilisation, whether it's for studying, work meetings, rest, or even recovery. Here's another intriguing fact: prolonged immobilisation directly leads to the formation of bone spurs. Spinal surgeons have observed that patients who underwent disc herniation surgery, discectomy, and/or fusion often developed new pain and weakness months afterward due to the growth of new osteophytes. It doesn't take a medical degree to realise that returning to surgery, shaving off newly formed bone spurs, and enduring an extended period of immobilisation for recovery isn't an ideal solution.

A better approach is to find a solution that keeps your body in motion. While no expert can fully comprehend the hard work you invest in ensuring your "Titanic" has a "bon voyage" throughout life's journey, have you also enlisted a health guard sailor to watch for icebergs and remind you at the first sign? This way, actions can be taken as early as possible, right at the initial warning sign. So, the next time you find yourself sitting for prolonged periods, remember that this seemingly innocent habit could be the first warning sign of potential health icebergs ahead. It's time to spot them early and take action to ensure a smoother voyage on your journey to better health.

# Your chiropractic adjustment rhythm

These four habits are essential to support your chiropractic care and they will help you to get well faster and stay well.

## Daily:

1. Stand on both legs evenly
2. Sit on both sitting bones evenly

## Post adjustment:

3. Drink a glass of water immediately
4. Go for a 10 minute walk before sitting

If you feel tired later in the day, it may be because the chiropractic adjustment has stimulated the body's healing process and your body wants to rest. You should always move straight after an adjustment. But if later in the day you feel like taking a nap don't feel guilty. Look after yourself. This is your time to heal.

## Do you know someone in pain?

Do you know someone suffering with back pain, neck pain, or headaches? We can help.

We are committed to helping the local community get out of pain, and back to doing what they love. That's why if your loved ones mention your name when they book in, they will receive a complimentary Consultation and Report of Findings appointment.

Bring them in for their initial consultation and let us help your loved ones to take their first step towards better spinal health and wellness today.

Scan this QR code to book your loved ones in for a complimentary Consultation and Report of Findings appointment.



To make an appointment, visit our website [willowlife.co.uk](http://willowlife.co.uk) or call us 0800 511 8966



## Win a £50 John Lewis Voucher

Scan the QR code and complete the quiz for a chance to win! Competition ends 1st November.



## Are Your Colleagues Suffering?

### Set up a free wellbeing workshop for your workplace

Did you know that 41% of absences in the workplace are caused by problems which originate in the spine? This includes backache, neck ache, headaches, sciatica etc. We can help you and your colleagues to combat the aches, pains and low energy levels that lead to poor motivation at work. We do this with a free of charge service that's available to companies in the Bristol area, providing one to one spinal checks for your team. Our qualified and experienced chiropractors will work closely with you and your colleagues to identify the root cause of their pain. We will provide information and guidance to help you all get back control of your own health so that you can be part of a healthy working environment.

#### Cost

Nothing. It's completely free. We are on a mission to help the people of Bristol enjoy a better quality of life, and so we offer these services for free. We'd love to connect with new people and share our expertise.

#### Package

We offer free of charge wellbeing workshops for local companies, which includes a health talk and 1-2-1 spinal checks for the for the whole team.

### A wellbeing workshop helps with the following:

1 Reduced Aches & Pains

3 Improved Productivity, Mood & Energy

2 Reduced Absence

4 Reduced Stress & Tension

We can help set up a free wellbeing workshop at your workplace. Reach out to [events@willowlife.co.uk](mailto:events@willowlife.co.uk) for more information.