

Can chiropractic kill or disable you? Research and observations of an occasional expert witness.

J. David Cassidy, DC, PhD, DrMedSc

Professor of Epidemiology and Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto
Senior Scientist, Health Care and Outcomes Research, University Health Network, Toronto, Canada
Honorary Professor in Clinical Biomechanics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southern Denmark

Onsdag d. 15. september 2010 kl. 12-13 i U100 på Campus

Alle er velkomne

Malpractice lawsuits alleging chiropractic cervical manipulation causes cervical artery dissection and subsequent ischemic stroke are not uncommon in North American courts. In some jurisdictions, there has been a movement to warn the public of potential death and disability associated with chiropractic care. (Figure 1) These allegations are further fuelled by case reports and opinion papers in the medical literature describing strokes after chiropractic care. To date, there have been only three analytic studies (i.e., controlled studies) on this issue.¹⁻³ In this presentation, I will summarize this literature, present new findings, discuss causation and make some observations concerning my experience as an expert witness in Canada and the United States.



Figure 1. Billboard in Connecticut, USA.

1. Cassidy JD, Boyle E, Cote P et al. Risk of vertebrobasilar stroke and chiropractic care: results of a population-based case-control and case-crossover study. *Spine* 2008;33:S176-S183.
2. Rothwell DM, Bondy SJ, Williams JI. Chiropractic manipulation and stroke: a population-based case-control study. *Stroke* 2001;32:1054-60.
3. Smith WS, Johnston SC, Skalabrin EJ et al. Spinal manipulative therapy is an independent risk factor for vertebral artery dissection. *Neurology* 2003;60:1424-8.