



management protocols in order to analyse and treat spinal and joint conditions.

Dr Jakubowski was the first fully trained and qualified Gonstead Doctor of Chiropractic in the UK. His practice, founded in 1992, is one of the largest specialising in spinal and joint rehabilitation. He is also a keen amateur golfer, playing off six, and he has dedicated much of his work to sports-related, bio-mechanic problems.

After X-raying my spine, he promptly told me I had a slipped disc at the base of my neck. He quickly identified the exact single vertebrae which was misaligned with the aid of a tool he calls a 'nervoscope', which detects uneven heat along the spine and can indicate inflammation and nerve pressure.

My problem, he explained, was likely to have been caused initially by a car accident I had five years before, or it was possibly a form of RSI: repetitive strain injury. Oh dear. I had previously privately mocked the idea of RSI being a legitimate injury, considering it to be a ruse dreamed up by gold-digging litigious types eager to take advantage of our contemporary compensation culture. My first piece of medicine was to eat a large portion of humble pie.

RSI is, I now understand, a series of 'microtraumatic physical stresses' experienced as a result of repeated operations, often in your occupation. In my case this would be using a laptop computer, which causes me to stoop rather than look straight forward, and spending hours at a time writing and reading. This causes the ligaments which hold the vertebrae together to exceed

their elastic limit, meaning they no longer adequately hold the joint in tight proximity. This then causes abnormal joint wear and tear, producing inflammation, muscle spasm and nerve impingement.

"What we do as chiropractic specialists is to firstly identify the *exact* vertebrae in question," says Jakubowski. "Then I rehabilitate it by means of a specific adjustment or manipulation into its correct position, taking into account the vertebrae above and below."

He sits you down and cradles your neck and skull while chatting away. Once you have relaxed, you are 'yanked' in a controlled manner. It left me with watering eyes. It hurt.

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However, after a few sessions (which become less painful each time), I now have full mobility back in my neck and shoulders and have full faith in his expertise and that of Karen and Amanda, the two therapists who carried out my deep-tissue massage.

I suspect I will now become a regular visitor to the clinic, simply to insure against recurring problems, and I will always sympathise with anyone who is genuinely suffering from a form of RSI. In fact, only recently has it been suggested that the 'yips' may not be a psychological problem but a form of RSI, caused by constant use of a similar grip position and twisted wrists.