

A few weeks ago, while my oldest son was having a check-up with the pediatrician, I collected several pamphlets from the clinic's reading area. I thought perhaps I could learn something while I waited. One of the pamphlets was about back health, something that I don't really think about very often. A couple of years ago, however, I had no choice but to think about it, because I suddenly developed back pain. It was nothing serious. I had been carrying my baby on my left hip for a year, and, I think, my back finally had had enough of the imbalance. So, it sent me a message, in the form of pain. Gosh, it was awful. I didn't know what to do. I tried stretching carefully, lying on the massaging chair that we have, and I finally took a pain killer. My husband advised me to go to the chiropractor to check out my spine, and get it adjusted if necessary. The next day, I found myself in line at the chiropractic clinic, waiting for my turn, and reading the posters on the wall that talked about back health. The chiropractic philosophy is that each vertebra affects a set of nerves that influence other parts of the body, including organs and glands. So everything is interrelated. If the spine is okay, the rest of the body can take care of itself. "Makes sense to me," I thought as I read about the parts of the spine: the spinal column, the spinal cord, vertebrae, sciatica, the discs, and the upper, middle, and lower back. As I looked at the people in line, I wondered which part of their backs were hurting, and why. I had met people who had been in car accidents and who had suffered whiplash. That was common. Some people had worse conditions which needed on-going treatment. My back pain was acute, meaning sharp but not long lasting. Others had a chronic condition which goes on for a long time. Well, my turn came. After having an x-ray, the chiropractor told me that I just had a couple of vertebrae out of place. He was pleasant and relaxed, and chatted away as I lay down on the adjustment bed. I remember that I was in the middle of answering one of his questions, when WHAMO! He pushed and twisted my lower back in one second. I heard a 'click' in my back and felt some pressure, and it was over. After checking my mobility, I was on my way home. The pain was gone, and my spine felt loose again. What a relief! I'll take an acute back problem over a chronic one any day/

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary and expressions: to have no choice but to..., to have enough of..., spinal cord, whiplash.

1. I have no choice but to sell my house; it is far too expensive to keep.
2. We had had enough of the cold weather, so we flew to the Caribbean.
3. The spinal column protects the spinal cord from which nerves go out into the body.
4. When the other car hit me from behind, my head was thrown back, and I got whiplash.