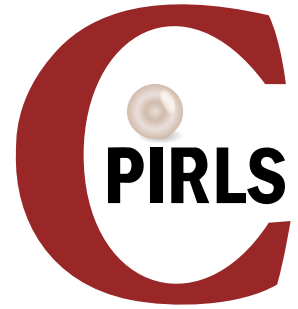


Safer Practice Notice



Monitoring and analysing chiropractic patient safety incident reports enables the CPiRLS Team to provide advice that can assist in ensuring improved standards of chiropractic patient safety. This Safer Practice Notice is a fast-track advice notice for all chiropractors.

Reducing the risk of harm associated with patient syncope

Notice issued: June 2022



Risk:

Patients may be harmed when fainting in a clinical setting.

Evidence:

A review of the CPiRLS database (2009-2019) identified a theme of patients fainting or feeling faint. Some incidents were associated directly with treatment whilst others occurred during patient examination, including blood pressure measurement.

Recommended actions:

- Be able to recognise that a patient is feeling faint and may experience syncope.
- Ensure competence to administer first aid in the clinical setting as required¹.
- Although syncope is normally benign, be aware that some patients may need to be referred for medical assessment².
- If a patient is feeling faint, help them to lie down on the floor (but not the treatment table) with their legs raised.
- Where possible, do not leave a patient unsupervised if they feel faint.
- Ensure competence in manually measuring blood pressure prior to performing this skill.

References:

1. The General Chiropractic Council (2021). Guidance on First Aid Training in Emergencies. https://www.gcc-uk.org/assets/publications/GCC-Guidance-First_Aid_Updated_May_2021.pdf (accessed 30 May 2022)
2. Parry SW, Tan MP (2010). An approach to the evaluation and management of syncope in adults. *BMJ (International edition)* 340(7744):468-473

Recommended reading:

NHS. Conditions: Fainting. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fainting/> (Accessed 30 May 2022)

Further information:

To read reported cases, and for further information about chiropractic patient safety incident reporting, visit <https://www.cpirls.org>.