

2023  
Edition

# THE CHIROPRACTIC SEO HANDBOOK

An in-depth guide to dominating local searches



**perfect**patients®



*introduction*

# SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION



## How New Patients Find You Online

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a term you’ve probably heard by now, especially if you have a practice website. Perhaps you’ve worked with an SEO company before or currently have a relationship with one. Your website provider may also do SEO or you may have a separate SEO contractor.

No matter your current situation, this eBook is for you. If you want to get new patients from the Internet, read on to learn the ins and outs of SEO – what it is, how it’s done, what not to do, and more!



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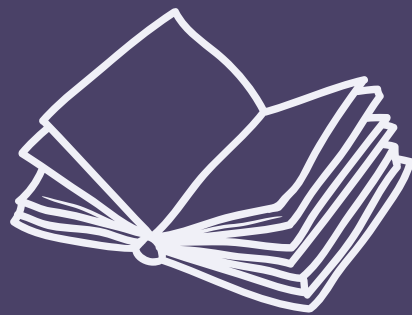
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WANT DONE-FOR-YOU SEO AND A WEBSITE THAT DELIVERS NEW PATIENTS?

[Book a Discovery Call](#) today to learn what a Perfect Patients website with best-in-class SEO and a digital marketing plan can do for your practice.

Section 1

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



**Backlinks:** A URL that links from another domain back to your own.

**Black hat SEO:** Attempts to game the system and artificially (and usually temporarily) increase rankings.

**Blog:** A blog is a regularly updated website written in a conversational, informal style. In SEO, a blog is used to increase the amount of content and keywords that can be ranked in search engine results helping more visitors find the web page.

**Bounce rate:** The percentage of visitors who visited one page of your website and then immediately left.

**Conversion rate:** The percentage of visitors to your website who perform the desired action - whether that's subscribing to a blog, scheduling an appointment, or simply clicking on another web page.

**Domain name:** Another word for website name or URL. Example:   
www.yourdomainhere.com

**Google Algorithm:** Google's algorithm catalogues web pages and searches for keywords and other factors to determine where they should rank in the search engine results page.

**Google local pack:** The list of local businesses that appear at the top of the Google search results below a Google maps snapshot.

**H1:** This is an html code for header 1, the most important heading on your website. It tells the search engines that this line of text has keywords that define what kind of information is on the page.

**Internal links:** A link that points to another page on the same website.

**Keyword stuffing:** Keyword stuffing is loading a webpage with keywords in attempt to gain unfair rankings in search engines. It is often done to the extent where the content no longer makes sense to the reader. This technique is considered spam or black hat SEO.

**Keywords:** The words and phrases people type into search engines and the words you want to include on your website so the search engines know what your site is about.

**Link building:** The process of getting other websites to link to pages on your website.

**Meta description:** An HTML code that allows you to summarize your web page and, if optimized for search terms, may be displayed in the search engine results under the clickable headline.

**NAP:** NAP stands for name, address, phone number.

**Off-page SEO:** The tactics used away from your actual website to increase the ranking of your web page in search engine results. This includes backlinks, directory listings, social media strategies, and others.

*Section 1, cont'd.*

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS



**On-page SEO:** The process of optimizing the content and the HTML code on the actual web page to help it rank higher in the search engine results.

**Organic search with local intent:** When the search term includes the searcher’s location, such as “chiropractor San Diego.” These searchers are ready to see a chiropractor soon, whereas someone just searching “chiropractor” may just be doing research.

**Organic search:** Organic search results are the web pages that appear because they are the most relevant to the keywords searched rather than being advertisements.

**SEO:** Search Engine Optimization is the process of optimizing a web page to improve its rank in a search engine results page (such as Google). The focus is on making it easier for search engines to find and rank the web page.

**SERP:** Stands for “Search Engine Results Page” and is the page of results supplied after entering your query.

**Time on site:** A measure of engagement that tells you the amount of time each visitor stayed on your website.

**Title tag:** An HTML code that allows you to specify the title of your web page to be displayed as the clickable headline in the search engine results.

**White hat SEO (Ethical SEO):** Optimizing a website for the search engines in a way that follows the search engine terms of service.



*The truth? Most people look at SEO the wrong way. They look at ways to do the least amount of work for the greatest initial return, when in fact, it’s quite the opposite... in order to succeed with it, you need to do the most amount of work for the least initial return. It’s a slow, steady and painful process, but that’s also the nature of the beast.*

-R.L. Adams, Forbes



## Section 2

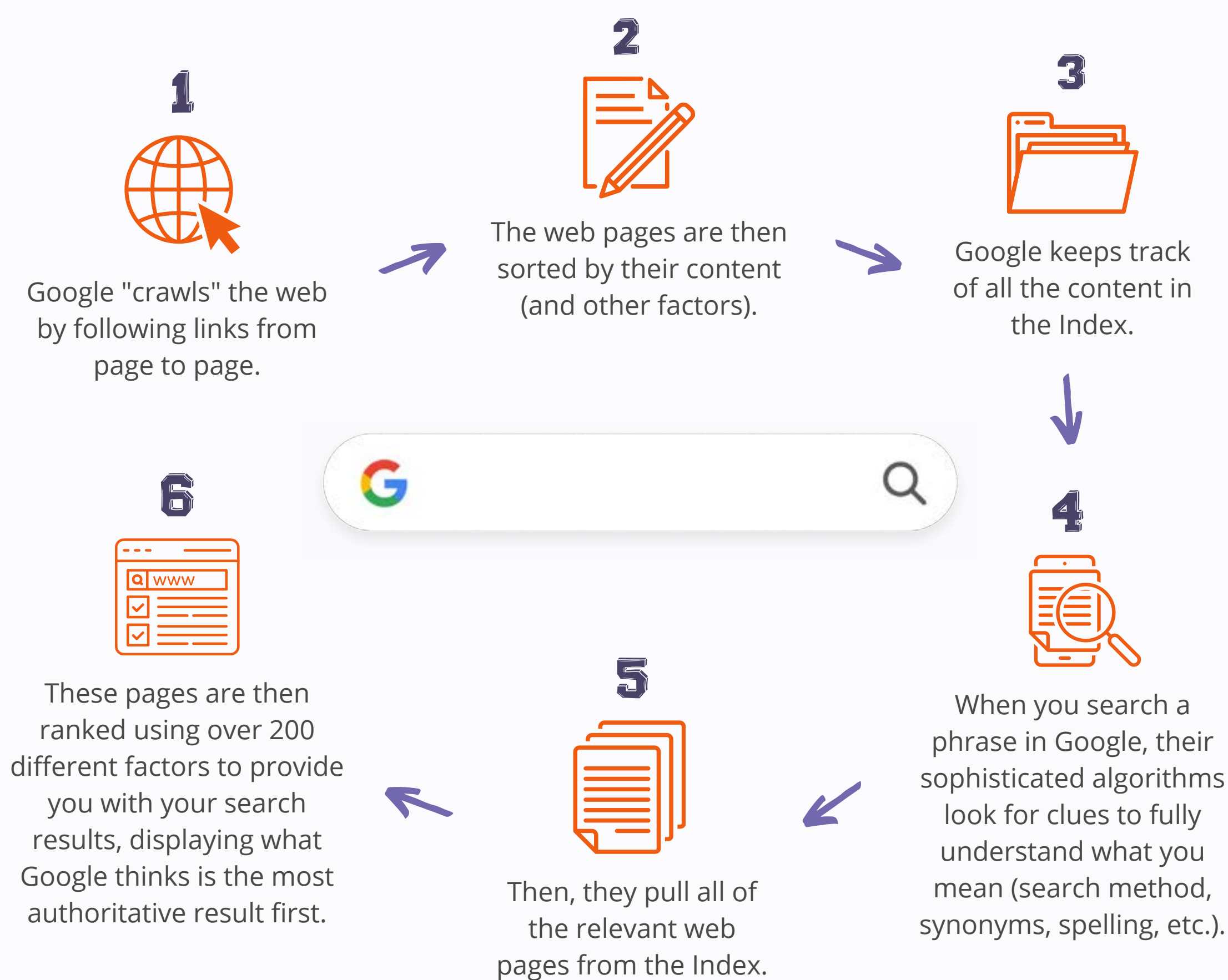
# HOW THE SEARCH ENGINES WORK

## Search Engines 101

We all know where to go to search for information online – Google, Yahoo, maybe even Bing. You type in your query, hit “Enter” and the search engine supplies you with what seems like an endless list of resources to answer your question. And usually what you’re looking for is right at the top of the results page.

*But how exactly do the search engines do it?*

Here's a basic run-down of Google's process (we'll focus on Google since it is by far the most popular):



### FUN FACT:

★ *Google has indexed over 130 trillion web pages!*

[Learn about the Perfect Patients approach to SEO >>](#)

## *Section 2, cont'd.*

### Spam (and not the kind in a can)

Have you ever come across a web page that looked questionable? Perhaps the content was gibberish or it repeated the same keyword over and over (known as keyword stuffing)?

Google has a reputation to uphold, therefore, works hard to fight against these types of web pages, referred to as “spam.” Through a combination of automatic and manual processes, they remove as much spam as possible to provide only the best quality search results.

The key is to pave the way for Google to risk its reputation on you, which is, in a sense, what SEO is all about.

Many chiropractic websites have been, and continue to be, removed from the search results for unethical optimization practices intended to trick the system. Most of the time, the practitioner is unaware of the “black hat” tactics being used by their SEO company. So how can you spot a “black hat” SEO provider? Be wary of claims like:

*"Page 1  
rankings  
guaranteed!"*

*"We have an  
'in' at Google."*

*"Rank #1 in  
just 30 days!"*



### Before Hiring Your Next SEO Company...

Google makes it very clear that no one can guarantee rankings. They also caution against SEO companies that are secretive about their tactics.

Once a website has been penalized, there are a couple of options depending on the extent of the “damage.” Sometimes the problems can be corrected and the site can be resubmitted to Google. Eventually, the website may regain its rankings. Other times, you may need to start from scratch with a new domain.

Before signing up with a new SEO company, [request a no-obligation Discovery Call](#) with Perfect Patients. We'll make specific recommendations and provide guidance on what to consider when choosing a company.



Section 2, cont'd.

Paid, Maps, and Organic Search Results

Google's search results page contains three types of results:

#1. Paid

The paid results are denoted with the word “Ad” and are featured at the top and bottom of the search results page. These spots can be purchased through Google’s pay-per-click platform, Google Ads. Learn more about [Google Ads here](#).

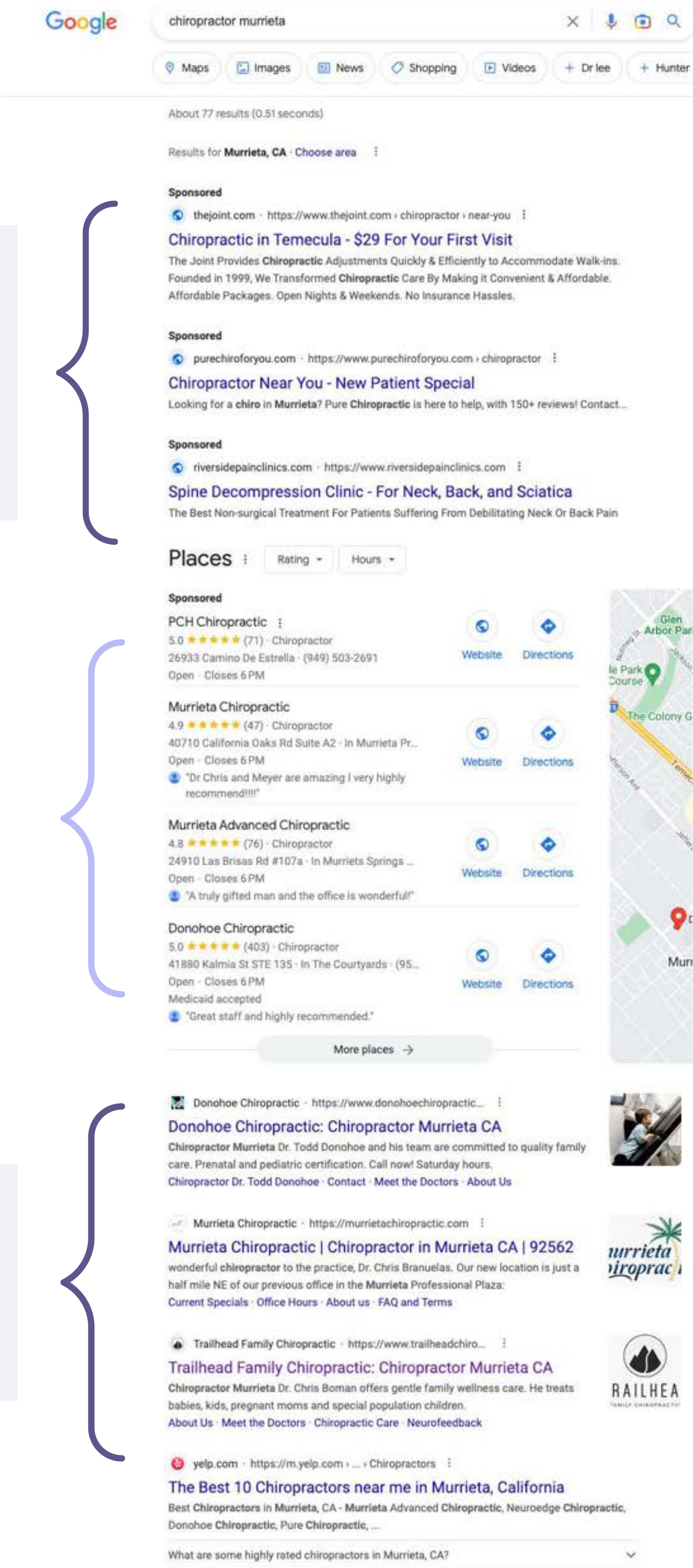
#2. Maps

Below the ads are the maps results. In a local search (a search for something like “chiropractor Meridian”), Google provides the top three local results along with a map and their basic business info.

In the SEO world, this is called the Local 3-Pack. The main factor Google uses to determine who appears here is proximity of the individual performing the search. (Although the amount of reviews is increasingly important, too.) Thus, every map listing result is unique to the person doing the search.

#3. Organic

Finally, you get to the organic results. These are the web pages that Google’s algorithm deemed the most relevant to your search query.





Section 2, cont'd.

Mobile vs. Desktop

The prevalence of smartphones and tablets has drastically changed how people search online. In fact, recent reports suggest that 68% of health-related searches are performed on a mobile device! Because for many people, a cell phone or tablet is their primary computing device, even at home.

And because mobile searches are different from desktop searches (in terms of user behavior and how the search engines return results), it's important to ensure that your practice website is optimized for both. Here are two of the most important ways mobile searches differ from desktop searches:

User Behavior

When mobile searches are performed on-the-go, users want accurate results fast. They may even be looking for a chiropractor to call right then and there, hoping for a same-day appointment.

They're on a smaller screen, making it even more important to be at the top of the search results and to have a website that is mobile responsive so they don't have to scroll to find the information they're looking for.

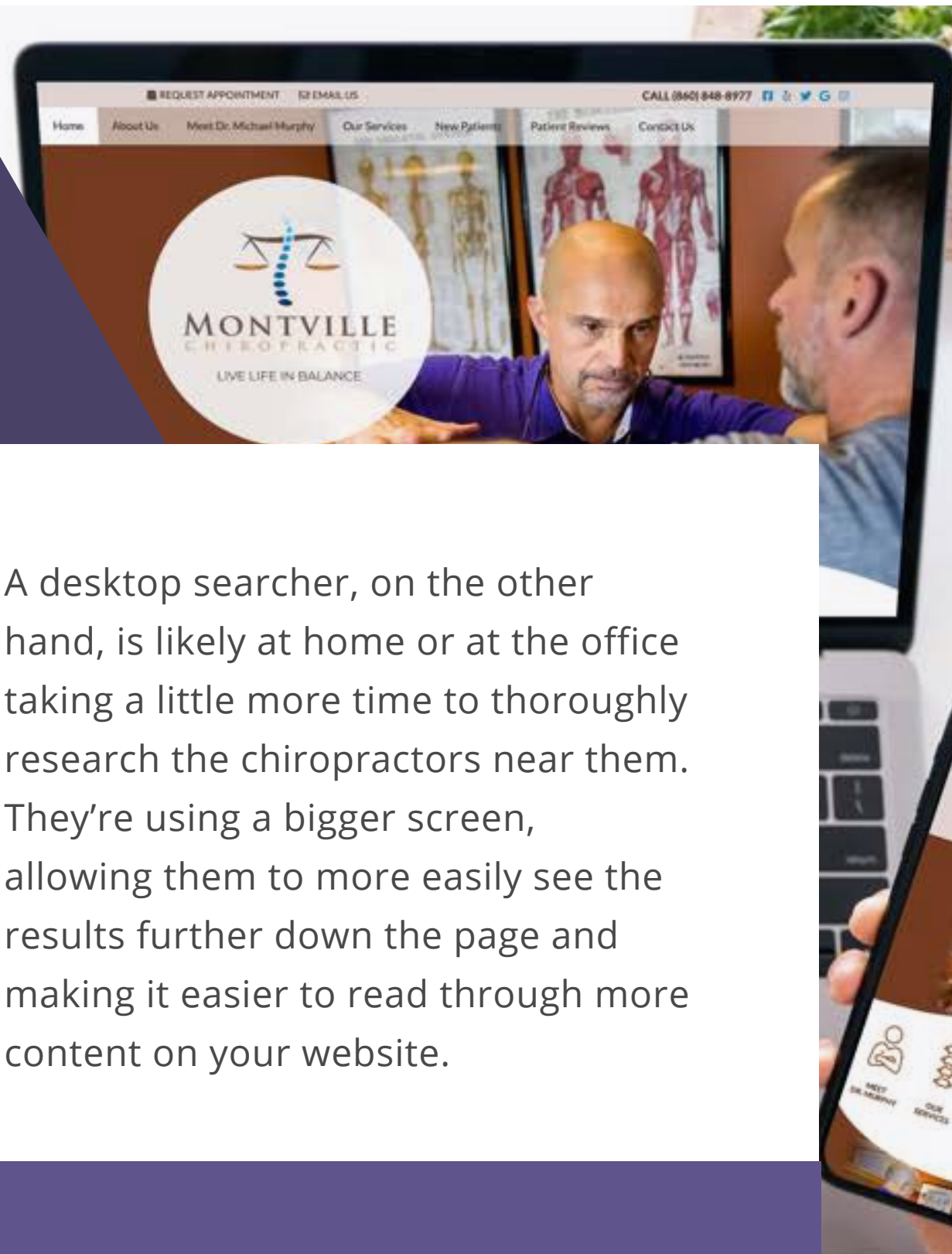
A desktop searcher, on the other hand, is likely at home or at the office taking a little more time to thoroughly research the chiropractors near them. They're using a bigger screen, allowing them to more easily see the results further down the page and making it easier to read through more content on your website.

Google's Algorithm

You might be surprised to learn that the algorithms used for mobile and desktop searches are different. Google recognizes that those searching from a smartphone often have different intent than those searching from a desktop at home. So, to make sure they present every searcher with the most relevant results possible, they have a mobile algorithm.

The difference between the two algorithms?

**Proximity** is by far the *most important factor* in a mobile search and Google will favor websites that are mobile-friendly, meaning those that aren't may not be shown in the mobile results at all.





## Section #3

# WHAT IS SEO?

## Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

*noun* : the process of optimizing a website to rank well in the search engines

The goal of SEO is to build and maintain your website in such a way that it is easy for Google to know:

✓ What your website is about

✓ Who your primary audience is

✓ Where you are located

✓ Anything else that will help them know when to show your website in the search results and, ultimately, trust you

But SEO isn't done just for the search engines.

It's also important to optimize your website ***for the people doing the searching.***

Because ranking well is one thing, but getting someone to click on your listing is another.

And because Google favors websites that are optimized for real people and what they actually do on your website, and not simply trying to fool their "bots."

## Ranking #1 is All that Matters... Right?

Ranking on page #1 in the top spot is the be-all, end-all when it comes to SEO.

Or so many SEO companies would lead you to believe.

Yes, effective SEO can produce high rankings. And high rankings lead to traffic.

But the true marker of success is the number of new patients your website is generating.

“

Simply put, in the beginning, Google doesn't trust you. If Google doesn't trust you, you're not going to rank on those lucrative first-page SERPs. You'll be lost in the fray amidst millions of others who're trying to claw their way to the top. So, the first real guiding principle of SEO is trust.

- R.L. Adams, Forbes

*Section 3, cont'd.*

## WHAT IS SEO?

Now, that's not to say that rankings for the right keywords don't matter. They do.

But searching for a healthcare provider is different than performing a search for, say, "the distance between Nashville and Austin." The top listing supplying the answer is clicked and you're done.

Shopping for a chiropractor is likely to involve visiting multiple websites to find the one that connects.

So while the top position is desirable, there are many other factors that can sway a new patient to choose you. So how do you know if your SEO provider is optimizing your website to rank well and convince new patients to choose you? You're getting new patients!

### FACT:

Great SEO cannot create demand.



## EVEN THE BEST SEO CAN'T CREATE DEMAND

We've established that the true marker of successful SEO is new patients. So a good SEO company should send you an endless supply of new patients, right? Not exactly.

It's important to remember that no one can create demand. Meaning, there are only so many prospective patients in your drawing area (usually within 20 minutes of your practice).

The demand for a chiropractor in a rural town with a population of 1,000 is going to be much less than the demand in a city with a population of 1 million. No SEO company, no matter how good, can change that fact. The goal is simply to get as many of the prospective patients that are ***in your area*** to choose you as possible.



## DONE-FOR-YOU SEO AND A WEBSITE THAT DELIVERS NEW PATIENTS

[Book a Discovery Call](#) today to learn what a Perfect Patients website with best-in-class SEO and a digital marketing plan can do for your practice.



Section #4

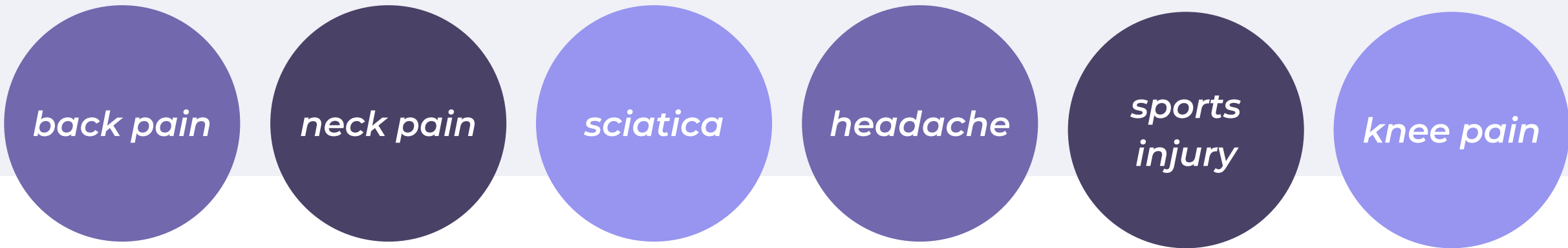
# ON-PAGE SEO

Ten years ago you could simply tweak some title tags and add your keyword into your content a few extra times and manipulate the Google ranking. While elements like title tags and keywords are still an important part of SEO, Google’s algorithm has gotten a lot smarter.

Not only does Google look at what you put on your website, they look at ***what visitors do on your website*** to determine how it ranks. Therefore, it is crucial to optimize your website for the search engines **and** for people.

## HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR KEYWORDS

To begin optimizing your website, you must first know what your target keywords are. These are the terms that your prospective patients are typing into a Google search when looking for a chiropractor. It might be tempting to try to rank for every relevant keyword you can think of, including:



But there are two problems with that strategy. First, is the **intent of the searcher**. Most condition-based searches are made by people seeking information, not by people who are ready to pull the trigger on chiropractic care. For that reason, Google returns a list of results that explain the condition, rather than promote someone who can resolve their problem.

Which leads us to problem #2. Trying to get your website to rank for a term like “sciatica” puts your website up against highly authoritative sites like WebMD and the Mayo Clinic. A local chiropractor’s website isn’t going to outrank a globally recognized, authoritative site like the Mayo Clinic’s. Google just won’t risk their reputation on it.

So what’s a chiropractor to do? **Target the terms we know prospective patients are actively searching when looking to begin chiropractic care!**

And we’ve been studying it for almost two decades. What we’ve found is that a searcher who types **“chiropractor + [location]”** into Google has more immediate intent than someone searching a condition or “chiropractor” alone. That’s why the best place to start when optimizing your website is with **“chiropractor + your primary jurisdiction.”**

*Note:* your primary jurisdiction is the city/town where your office is physically located.

Section 4, cont'd.

KEYWORD DENSITY

Now you have your main keyword. Let’s say it’s “chiropractor Cincinnati.” Ten years ago, SEO’s would have just put “chiropractor Cincinnati” on every page of your site as many times as they could. So much so that the content wouldn’t read well, but rankings would improve. It might have looked something like this:

Chiropractor Cincinnati

**Dr. John Smith is your chiropractor Cincinnati. For a chiropractor Cincinnati, come to ABC Chiropractic in Cincinnati. You won’t find a better chiropractor Cincinnati for your family’s health needs.**

But this practice, known as “keyword stuffing,” is a thing of the past. Google caught on quickly and will now penalize websites that they believe are trying to fool the system with such tactics.

Therefore, the best approach is a natural one. Meaning, the keyword should be in your heading (the <h1>) as well as your content just a couple times and it should read well. Here is an example of what that might look like:

Chiropractor Cincinnati | Welcome!

**As the leading prenatal and family chiropractor in the Cincinnati area, we welcome you and your family to enjoy an incredible healing experience. No matter your health goals, Cincinnati chiropractor Dr. John Smith and his team at ABC Chiropractic provide extraordinary care to help you achieve them.**

Google still knows that you’re a chiropractor in Cincinnati, but now the prospective patient is greeted with text that sounds natural and effectively explains your practice.



TITLE TAGS AND META DESCRIPTIONS

When it comes to on-page SEO, three of the most important elements are title tags, meta descriptions, and headings (mentioned above). Again, it’s crucial that these are optimized for both the search engines and the people searching.

Let’s explore this with a few examples.



Section 4, cont'd.

TITLE TAGS AND META DESCRIPTIONS

A title tag (highlighted in green below) is what you see as the linked text in a Google search result. The meta description (highlighted in yellow) is the small paragraph of text underneath it.

Chiropractor La Grange, Western Springs, Brookfield IL

www.visitthewellnesspath.com/ ▼

Start your healing journey today w/our Chiropractor La Grange! Same-day appointments & walk-ins welcome. Insurance accepted. Call (708) 497-2441 now!

In the example above, you have the keyword the prospective patient searched in the title tag and meta description, and you have the information they need to choose to click on your listing:

- ✓ It is clear where the practice is located (La Grange [primary jurisdiction], Western Springs, Brookfield [neighboring jurisdictions])
- ✓ Key practice information is highlighted (same-day, walk-ins, and insurance accepted)
- ✓ And there is a clear call-to-action (“Call (708) 497-2441 now!”)



Now compare the first listing with this one:

Smith Chiropractic Car Accident Smithfield NC

smithfieldchiro.com/ ▼

Smith Chiropractic Center - Chiropractic Care in Smithfield, NC.

Is there enough information there to make you choose this practice over the first example? Probably not. This title tag and meta description were clearly both written only for the search engines - it has the keyword a few times, but it does not read well.

It's safe to assume that this chiropractor is targeting patients who have been in a car accident, but prospective patients aren't going to take the time to figure out a confusing title tag. They'll simply move on to your competitor whose search result is much clearer.

Next up... Content

*Section 4, cont'd.*

## CONTENT

The content of your website is what tells Google what your site is about. It's how Google knows if your website will answer a searcher's query. Regularly adding new content shows Google that you are relevant and providing your visitors with new information.

Therefore, your website needs to be filled with well-written, informative content that will not only help Google know how to rank you, but will encourage prospective patients to choose you as their chiropractor.

One of the best ways to regularly add fresh, new content to your website is by blogging.

Blogging is not only great for your site's rankings, it's a great way to communicate with your patients (and prospective patients).


### BLOGGING

*"A blog is a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to express yourself to the world. A place to share your thoughts and your passions. Really, it's anything you want it to be."*

-Kenneth Byrd, Blog Basics

By sharing your thoughts and philosophies in blog form, you can connect with and attract your "tribe."

Custom, professionally-written blog posts are included in the Perfect Patients Premium and Ultimate plans. [Learn more here.](#)



## IT'S ALL ABOUT ENGAGEMENT

Ultimately, on-page SEO is all about how visitors engage with your website. Sure, you need to setup your site for success in the search engines with things like keywords and title tags.

But it has become abundantly clear that engagement is an increasingly important ranking factor because it indicates that Google delivered the results that you were looking for.

While no one knows with 100% certainty what Google's algorithm considers, many experts believe that factors like click-through-rate and dwell time have an impact on rankings, whether directly or indirectly.

**What does that mean for your website?**

It means that you need to connect with your visitors. You want prospective patients to not only click on your listing in the search results, but stay on your site and browse. Learn more about you. Visit your Contact page.

Remember, *Google needs to trust you.*

If visitors click to your site and then immediately hit the "back" button, that sends a negative signal to Google. Your site is not sufficiently answering the searcher's question.

But if visitors click to your site and then stay a while, visiting multiple pages, reading your content, Google sees that they can trust your site to satisfy the searcher's query.



Section 4, cont'd.

# HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

## You Have a Split Second

Internet users make decisions in a split second. If your website doesn't immediately grab their attention, they'll move on to your competitor.

If your website design grabs their attention, but your content is lackluster, they'll move on to your competitor.

Here are a few of the top ways to engage your website visitors in an effort to improve your rankings and, at the same time, convert more new patients!



### 1. Website Design

Internet-savvy prospective patients will use your website to judge your clinical skills. **Outdated website design = outdated doctor.** It may not be fair, but it's the way it is.

A modern, mobile-friendly design is step #1 to getting prospective patients to stay on your site. A clean design, professional images, easy navigation. These are all elements of a user-friendly chiropractic website that encourage visitors to stay on your site to learn more about you.



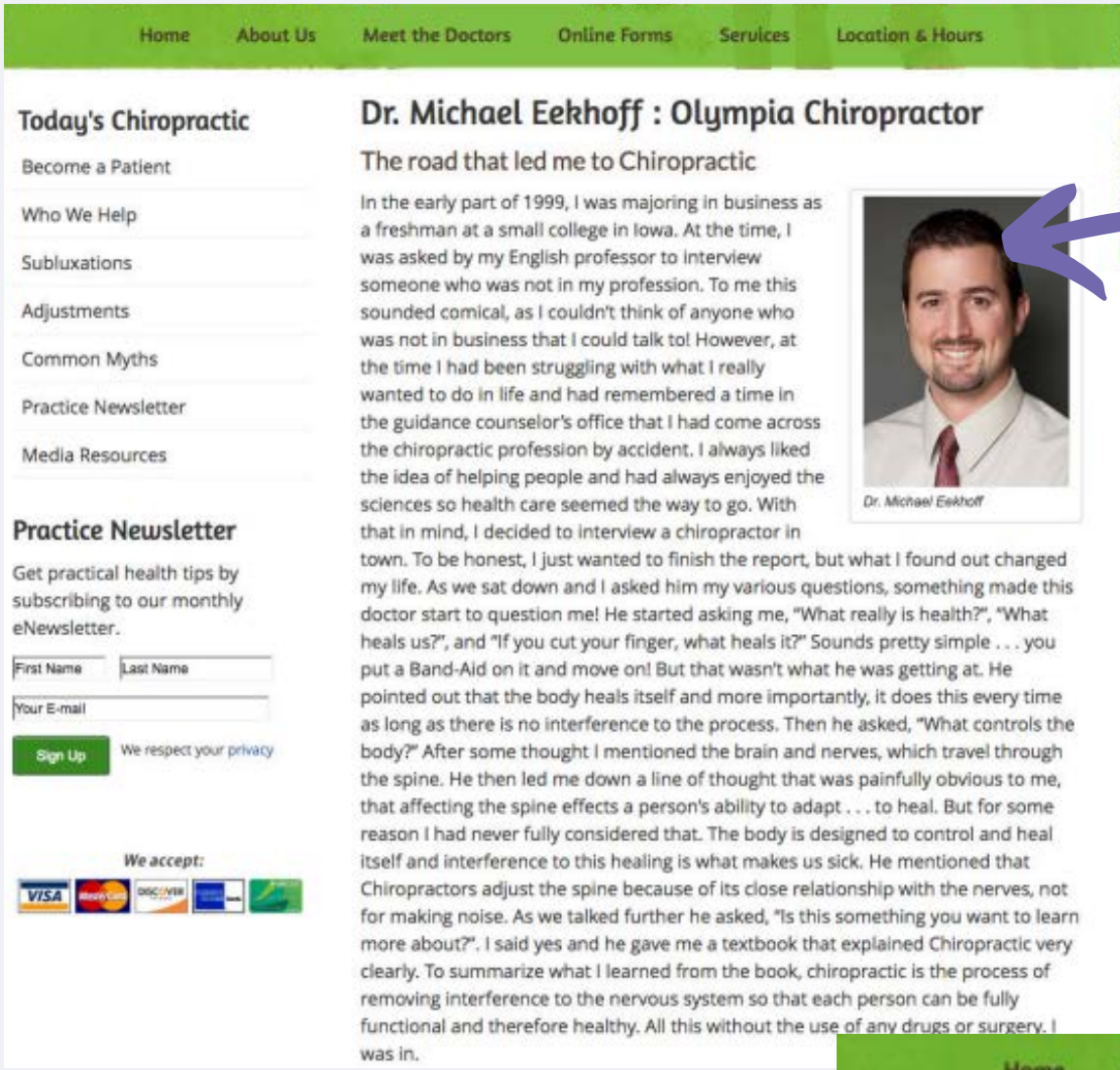


Section 4, cont'd.

# HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

## 2. Readability

Which of these two pages would you be more inclined to read?



It's safe to assume that B would grab your attention. Why? Because it's *browsable*.

And that's what Internet users do, they browse. Big chunks of text are off-putting because they're not easily scanned. Example B is a "readable" page because it includes:

- ✓ Headings & sub-headings
- ✓ Dividers to break up text
- ✓ Short paragraphs
- ✓ Design elements

A prospective patient could scan this page quickly and learn enough about your practice to decide whether to stay on your site or go back to the search results.





## Section 4, cont'd.

# HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

### 3. Calls-to-Action (CTA)

It may seem silly, but it's important to tell your website visitors what you want them to do. These commands (gentle nudges, we'll call them) are known as calls-to-action (CTA).

A call-to-action is as simple as adding a button that says "Contact Us Today" or "Learn More" to your site. Here are a few more examples of strong CTA's:

- ✓ Ready to get started? Give us a call.
- ✓ Call now for a no-obligation consultation.
- ✓ We'd love to meet you and answer your questions.
- ✓ Spinal problems rarely get better on their own. Begin care today.
- ✓ Are you a good candidate for chiropractic care? Find out!
- ✓ Arrange to tour our practice and meet the team.
- ✓ Have you subscribed to our newsletter? It's a great way to learn more.
- ✓ Request an appointment today and take the first step to better health.
- ✓ If you have questions not answered here, give us a call.
- ✓ Still have questions? Complete the contact form below and we'll get right back to you.
- ✓ What else would you like to know? Email your question using the link below.

Put yourself in your prospective patient's shoes. What information are you looking for on each page of your site? Once you've answered this question, strategically add calls-to-action to guide the prospect to their destination... scheduling an appointment!



## Section 4, cont'd.

# HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

## 4. Internal Linking

Internal links are links that point to another page on the same website. They can be links in a menu or links within the content. These links help the visitor get to the next relevant page of content they may be looking for. For example, a sentence on your homepage may say:

Chiropractor [Dr. Lauren Smith](#) offers Upper Cervical Specific Chiropractic, which helps restore proper function to the nervous system so the body can heal and function optimally.

In this example, "Dr. Lauren Smith" would be linked to the doctor's bio page on the same website. This leads the website visitor along the new patient journey toward discovering more about the practice and, ultimately, booking an appointment.



But there's more to internal links than visitor engagement. **Internal linking plays a significant role in SEO.** Links pointing from one page of a website to another page on the same website tell the search engines where to go next, how the content on the website is related, and helps them crawl your most valuable pages. Without internal links, your pages may not get indexed, thus they may not appear in the search results.

This graphic from Moz illustrates the importance of internal links well:



Without internal linking, the "spider" doesn't know how to get from one page to the next. Good SEO makes it as easy as possible for the search engines to find and rank your content.

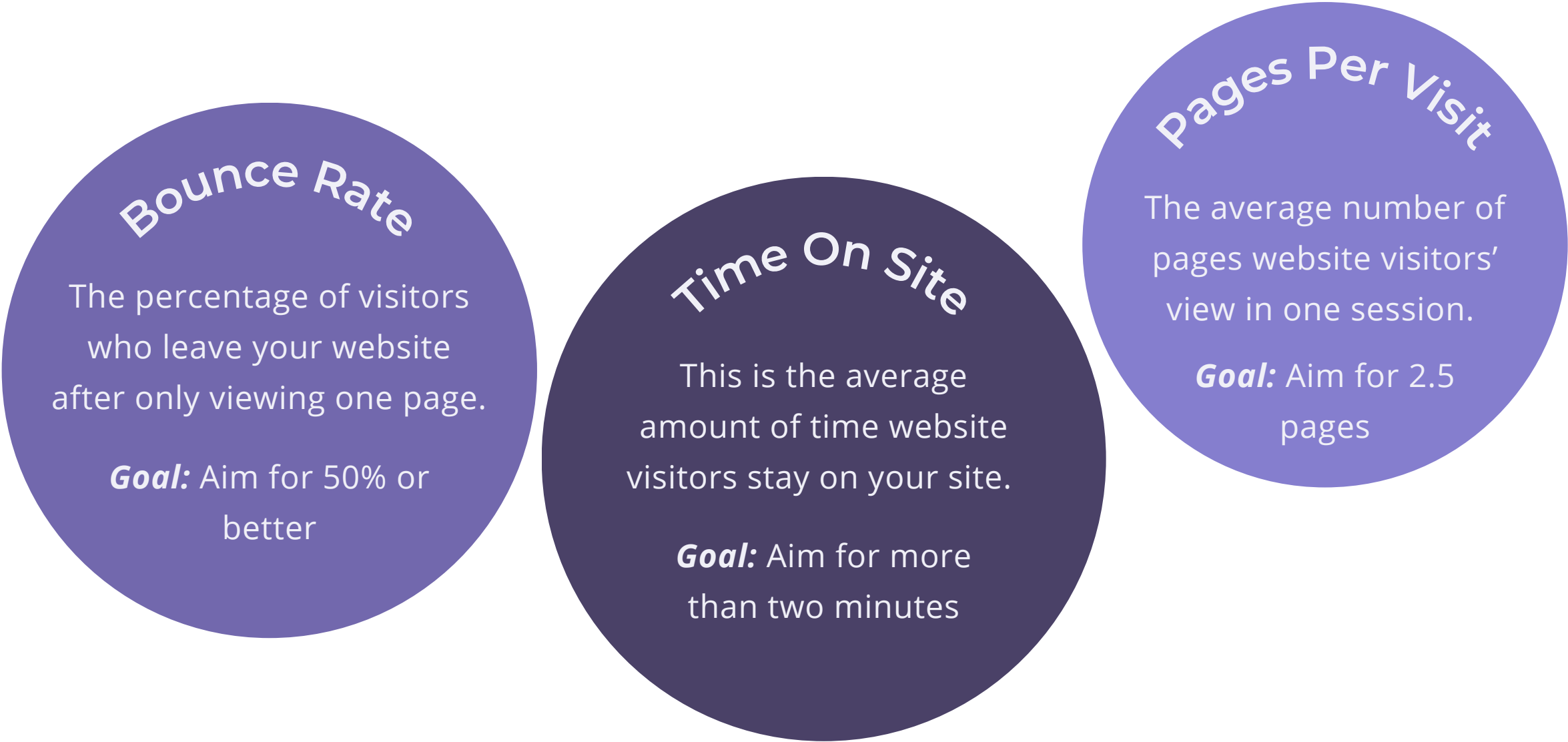


Section 4, cont'd.

# How to Measure Engagement

Obviously, the best way to measure how engaged your website visitors are is by the number of new patients you’re getting. But using Google Analytics, you can get some insight into what visitors are doing on your site and how you might improve.

Here are a few key metrics you’ll want to monitor:



If these metrics are indicating a problem, it’s time to reevaluate your website. Start by evaluating and making improvements in the areas described earlier (design, readability, and calls-to-action) and see if you notice an improvement.



## New Patient Conversion

Website engagement is not only a positive signal to Google to improve your rankings, it's an indicator that your website is speaking to your target audience. It should correlate to new patient production. The percentage of website visitors who turn into new patients is called your "conversion rate."

At Perfect Patients, we've studied the online behavior of thousands of website visitors who became patients to master the art and science of conversion. And a high-converting website can be the main factor that prompts new patients to drive past other “chiropractors near me” to see **you**.

Learn more about website conversion

*Section 5*

# OFF-PAGE SEO

We've spent some time discussing the things you can do on your site to optimize it for the search engines. Now let's dive into what you can do off site. Known as "offpage SEO," the following strategies are intended to send strong, positive signals to Google about your site.

## Citations

Citations are mentions of your business around the web that contain your practice name, address, and phone number (NAP). With or without a link to your website, citations are an important ranking factor in local SEO.

***Again, it all comes down to trust.***

If authoritative sites, like your local chamber of commerce or a yellow page directory, are mentioning your business, Google assumes they can trust you. Thus, in theory, your rankings improve.

There are two important things to know when it comes to your practice NAP and citations:



### BE CONSISTENT

You want the mentions of your NAP to be consistent across the web. For instance, if you always abbreviate "Suite" as "Ste." in

your address, make sure all your citations have it written that way. While the search engines are getting much better at parsing together slight variations, it's good to be as consistent as you can.



### UPDATE, UPDATE, UPDATE

This cannot be stressed enough when it comes to changes to your practice name, address or phone number. If you move offices, change your practice name, or get a new phone number, make sure you track down *all of your citations* and get them updated. If Google sees your practice cited at two different locations, they won't know which is accurate, thus may not show your listing at all.

## Backlinks

Links to your website from other websites are known as backlinks. The search engines see backlinks as a sign that other websites trust you. If other websites trust you, maybe Google should, too.

Backlinks have been a staple of SEO since the beginning. However, their place in SEO has evolved drastically over the last decade.



*Section 5, cont'd.*

# OFF-PAGE SEO

Practices that are now deemed “black hat” used to be commonplace – link farms, auto-posting comment spam, and more. These tactics would get links back to your website on hundreds, maybe even thousands, of websites in no time. Quantity, not quality, is what mattered.

But, obviously, the search engines caught on and now condemn such practices. In fact, websites that have these types of spammy backlinks will be penalized by Google and lose their place in the search results.

So what place do backlinks have in SEO today? They’re still important, but like keywords, you want to use them naturally.

***And it is the quality of the site linking to you that matters.***

For example, it would be natural for your practice website to get backlinks from:

- Your local Chamber of Commerce
- Chiropractic / healthcare provider directories
- Acupuncturists and massage therapists
- Local fitness centers
- Charities or other local organizations
- Local or national chiropractic associations
- Technique directories
- Radiographic consultants
- PI lawyers you work with regularly

Submit your practice information and website link to relevant directories (ChooseNatural.com and HealthGrades.com, for instance).

Talk to the businesses you collaborate with (massage therapists, injury attorneys, etc.).

Donate to a local charity that links to sponsors on their website.

There are many easy ways to get a number of relevant backlinks that can help your site’s rankings.

It would not, however, make sense for your website to have backlinks from a dozen fashion bloggers in various countries or two hundred unrelated eCommerce sites. Those would signal spam to Google and could put your website at risk of a penalty.

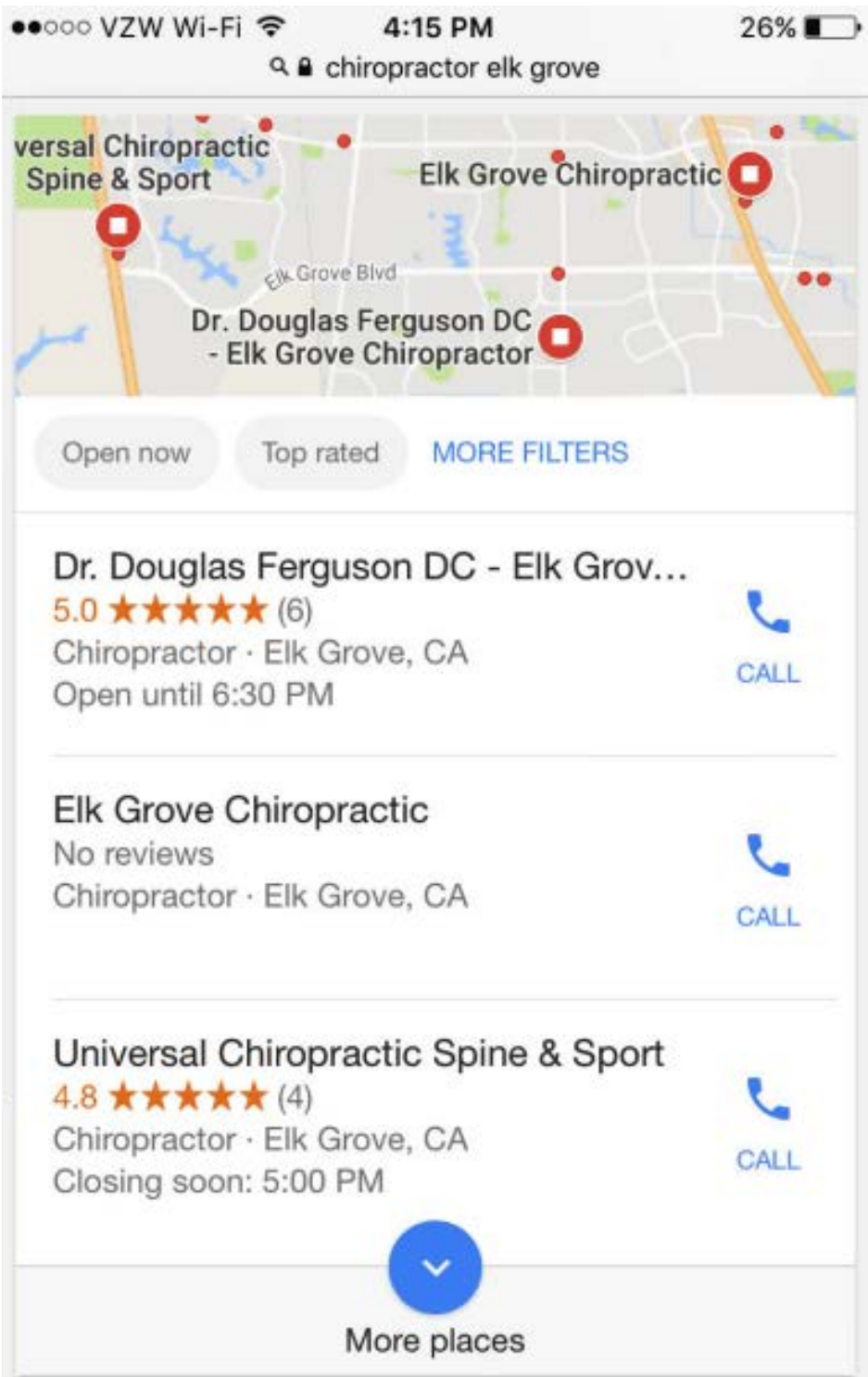
If your practice website has old, spammy links from work done by a past SEO company, you likely need to consider “link pruning” – the process of systematically cleaning up the bad links.

To learn more about link pruning and how Perfect Patients can help you rebuild your online reputation, [\*\*book a Discovery Call\*\*](#) with one of our Digital Marketing Consultants.

Section 5, cont'd.

GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

When someone performs a search for a local business (such as someone searching “chiropractor” from a mobile device), Google returns a number of local results. The search return might look something like this:



FACT

*"To improve your business's local ranking, use Google Business Profile to claim and update your business information."*

-Google

Google gets this information from your Google My Business (GMB) listing, which is why it's imperative that your listing is claimed, complete, and accurate. Google advises that you:

- ✓ Fill out your listing completely
- ✓ Verify your location
- ✓ Keep your business hours up-to-date
- ✓ Respond to and manage reviews
- ✓ Add photos of your practice

*There are three main factors used to determine local map results:*

1 RELEVANCE

This is how well your business listing matches what the user is looking for (which is why it's important to have an accurate, detailed listing).

2 DISTANCE (AKA "PROXIMITY")

How close is your business to the searcher? This is clearly a ranking factor that you can't do anything about. What you can do is make sure your listing is completed accurately so you show up for people searching in your area.

3 PROMINENCE

How reputable is your business? This factor combines offline and online reputation. For instance, a well-known brand like Target will rank higher than an unknown boutique when someone is looking for a retail store. However, information that Google can get about your business from across the web plays in here, too. Directory listings, backlinks, reviews, etc.





## Section 5, cont'd.

### GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Some chiropractors try to game the system by stuffing their GMB listings with additional keywords. But Google is cracking down on this as well. The practice name listed on your GMB needs to be an exact match to your actual business name with no additional keywords (like “Houston Chiropractor”) added.

*If you're a Perfect Patients client, your Google Business Profile is optimized as part of your service.*

### REVIEWS

Have you ever searched “restaurant near me” and made a decision on where to eat dinner based on the number of stars a restaurant had on Yelp? Probably.

And while you may just use online reviews to judge restaurants, consumers everywhere are using reviews to make decisions about which car wash to frequent, who to hire to do home repairs, and even, you guessed it, which chiropractor to see.

As noted above, reviews on your Google Business Profile can directly impact your rankings in local searches, not to mention influence whether or not a prospective patient chooses to click on your listing.

But having positive reviews on other popular sites like Facebook and Yelp help, too. Again, Google is scouring the web to determine *if they can trust you*. More positive reviews on reputable review sites sends Google a positive signal.

Just like backlinks, **reviews need to happen naturally**. They cannot, for instance, all come from the same IP address – i.e. from a computer in your office – or in the same day, or Google will filter them, and potentially your listing altogether, for being spammy.



Don't be afraid to ask your patients for reviews. Happy patients are usually more than willing to share their experiences with others.

Want to put review requests on autopilot? [Learn about online review automation.](#)

### PROXIMITY

According to the experts, **proximity is the top local ranking factor**. Google wants to show you a chiropractor that's 5 minutes away, not all the way across town, which is why your search results change based on where you're located.

Therefore, ranking is one metric of success, but it's not the most important metric. You can still get a lot of traffic to your website based on hyper-local searches made from your neighborhood and zip code. **Visibility is the key here, not ranking.**

And now that Google Business Profiles provide “Insights,” or traffic data, we can see exactly how many calls are made to a practice and visits to their website from their Google listing. We can even narrow it down to how many visitors viewed the listing, which has been showing us clearly that even when a site isn't ranking well, it's still being found on the map.

*Section 5, cont'd.*

## RED FLAGS



We've touched on some of the more well-known red flags such as spammy backlinks and keyword stuffing, but there are a couple of others you may not be aware of.

**The first is changes to your NAP.** You may remember that NAP is your practice's name, address, and phone number. Moving offices frequently or changing your practice name is a red flag to Google.

Again, it all comes down to trust. If you move locations frequently, how can they trust that the information they have for your business is accurate? If they can't trust that it is, they might not show your listing. You can combat this by not moving offices too frequently and making sure you always update your NAP across the web anytime you make a change.

**The second red flag is sharing space with other chiropractors.** A change in the local algorithm means that many chiropractic practices that share space are being filtered off the map because Google will only show one practice per location.

*If you can avoid sharing space, do so.*

But if you have to share, make sure to have your own dedicated suite number and a unique NAP. It's no guarantee of visibility, but it's your best shot.





*conclusion*

# THE DAYS OF DIY SEO ARE LONG GONE

It takes an entire department at Perfect Patients to keep up with Google and respond on behalf of our clients.

But remember – your Google ranking is only a piece of the puzzle.

We discovered this the hard way... Learn how an embarrassing blunder led to a conversion breakthrough. [Read the story here >>](#)

Our team of SEO and conversion experts has analyzed the paths of patients through thousands of chiropractic websites. We know exactly what they expect to see and exactly what makes them request an appointment.

***We're chiropractic website conversion experts.***

If your website isn't converting new patients and you think your current SEO strategy is to blame, request your no-obligation Discovery Call with a Perfect Patients Digital Marketing Consultant today.

**[BOOK A DISCOVERY CALL >>](#)**



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