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Making Adjustments

DR. STU. CHIROPRACTOR TO ACTIVE FAMILIES // BY ALISON PRATT

"I LOVE the way the body works," says Dr. Stuart Weitzman, a Bedford Hills chiropractor and exercise enthusiast who shares his name with the famous shoe designer. "During a race, I'm monitoring my own fluids and stride but also mechanically assessing everyone's gait."

Weitzman, better known to his patients and to the race community he frequently sponsors as Dr. Stu, can't contain his passion for human anatomy. "I really geek out on this stuff," he says. Race pictures of his smiling clients and friends, as well as Lake Placid Ironman posters, decorate the walls of his Bedford

Hills office, his website, and Facebook page.

Every year, Weitzman lends his expertise to triathletes competing at the Lake Placid Ironman. "We do A.R.T., Active Release Technique," explains Weitzman, "which is a kind of soft-tissue-based massage movement pioneered by Dr. Michael Leahy." A.R.T. helps athletes prepare for race day and avoid injury to complete the grueling challenge of a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride, and 26.2-mile run.

Carly Johnson, a Team USA triathlete and mother of two, is one of Weitzman's patients. "I always tell people who are experiencing overuse injuries, 'You've got to see Dr. Stu.' And, it works."

What is surprising about Weitzman's practice to a person unfamiliar with chiropractic care is that many of his patients aren't suffering from back or muscular pain. For instance, Johnson has been taking her son and daughter to Weitzman since they were little. "My daughter had a lot of asthma and respiratory issues when she was two," explains Johnson. "Dr. Stu helped open up her airways and help drain her ears of fluid." Now her daughter, 7, is a gymnast, who regularly asks to be taken to

"Dr. Stu" to put her body back in alignment.

A book in Weitzman's office is filled with testimonials from patients, and the most glowing of these are from mothers who bring their children to Weitzman, who trained to be a family practitioner, for regular checkups and common colds.

"Natural health controls every function of your body," explains Weitzman. "When you adjust the spine, you can change messages to the brain." Recently, he has seen a lot of patients suffering from symptoms of concussion, which can be alleviated by chiropractic care. "I want

to improve the mechanics of whatever my patients are doing to minimize pain and injury," he says. "I treated a professional violinist, who was having pain in his shoulder. I looked at the way he held the bow and with a little tweaking helped him so that he could play again."

Weitzman also regularly helps swimmers modify their strokes so as to relieve rotator-cuff pain. Golfers go to him for a swing analysis and runners for gait analysis "We don't run marathons to hurt," says Weitzman.

In 2012, Weitzman completed his own Lake Placid Ironman, which gives him particular insight into the challenge athletes' bodies face when stretched to the limit. In fact, Weitzman decided to become a chiropractor after suffering back pain as a high-school lacrosse player. "I was taking Advil constantly, but it wasn't until I went to a chiropractor that I found a way out of the pain."

He has brought that same passion he had for college sports—lacrosse and soccer—to his own training. "I broke my leg playing pickup soccer, so after it healed, I started jogging around the neighborhood. Then I did a turkey trot. Now I've done six marathons and an Ironman."

He might start small, but Weitzman tends to push himself. "Racing is good for goal-oriented people," he says. "You don't have to rely on somebody else."

With practices in Bedford Hills and Stamford, and an active training schedule, Weitzman, who is married and has three young sons, acknowledges that he's got his own team working behind him. "I couldn't do this all without having a supportive wife. That's the key."



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