

# BLOGGING FOR BEGINNERS



Your Perfect Patients practice blog  
and what to do with it

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A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair, smiling and looking at a laptop. She is wearing white earbuds and a light-colored, textured sweater. The background is a blurred cafe or office setting with other people and warm lighting.

*Perfect*Patients

“ Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one. ”

**Abbott Joseph Liebling**

## One of the native features of your new Perfect Patients website is a state-of-the-art blog.

Blog is a relatively new word created by combining the word “web,” as in the World Wide Web, and the word “log,” as in the frequently used narrative device on Star Trek as in, “Captain’s log, stardate 41153.7.” Weblog was simply shortened to blog.

Your website blog is an amazing tool that can serve one or all of the following purposes:

- ✓ *A platform for personal expression about topics that interest you*
- ✓ *A way of enhancing the new patient performance of your website*
- ✓ *A forum for engaging an audience and cultivating conversations*
- ✓ *A method of adding new content that you can repeatedly reference*
- ✓ *A technique to increase the search engine authority of your website*

On the pages that follow, I’ll explore these and other aspects of blogging. Together, we’ll walk through the process of writing and publishing your first blog post. By the end of this eBook the mystery will be gone and the opportunities will inspire you.

I’ve been blogging since 2006. With an average of two posts a week, that’s over 700 different pieces of content dealing with the many facets of chiropractic practice and the doctor/patient relationship.

Obviously, your blog will cover a different subject matter and you may only make one post a week. Or just one a month. Either way, my objective here is to open the door to a new way of sharing your philosophy, cultivating an audience, attracting more new patients and having a lot of fun and personal satisfaction in the process.

## So let’s get started!

## Key Terms

Blogging, like chiropractic and other disciplines, has its own vocabulary. When trying to master something new, understanding the lingo is half the battle!

Here are some of the essential terms and what they mean:

### **Archive**

Listing of previous blog posts from most recent to oldest.

### **Blogroll**

A list of other blogs you like or recommend and links to them that usually appear in the sidebar column.

### **Category**

A way of organizing posts by topic, such as Chiropractic Myths, Health Tips, Case Files, etc.

### **Comment**

A way for readers to share their opinions about your post. Comments can be turned off (see **Page**) and must be moderated (see **Moderation**) because of Comment Spam.

### **Comment spam**

Comments of little or no value, which include a link or reference to another site designed to use the search engine authority of your site to enhance the search engine authority of their site.

### **Draft**

A blog post that is being composed prior to its actual publication.



### **Internal link**

A word, phrase or photo that links to another page on the same website. (Highly recommended to enhance the SEO of your site.)

### **Like**

A button or small icon that visitors can click on to show other Facebook users their appreciation for a particular item or piece of content.

### **Moderation**

The process of reviewing comments posted to a blog and approving them before the comment is published and visible to website visitors.

### **Page**

An article in which the ability for visitors to comment has been turned off.

### **Permalink**

The unique URL of a post that allows anyone to link specifically to it.

### **Podcasting**

Blogging with audio recordings rather than the printed word.



## Key Terms (continued)

### Post

Also known as an entry. A blog is merely a series of posts which generally allow website visitors to leave a comment.

### Publish

To make a post visible to visitors to your website.

### Scheduled

A post that is waiting to be published, such as a Perfect Patients post made on your behalf that gives you time to review and edit.

### Share

A button or icon, which when clicked, allows the user to add the content to their Facebook timeline or share via email.



### Tag

Assigning a searchable term to identify the type or types of content within a particular post, such as "Myths," "New Patients" or "Diet and Nutrition."

### Trackback

A blogging convention in which you provide a link in your post to the post of another blogger you're blogging about.

### Trust link

A link to another website with greater authority than your own.

### Vlog

A blog that is largely video posts rather than the written word.



# The Benefits of Blogging

Blogging is used to increase website traffic and visitor engagement, crucial metrics in determining your search engine ranking. Traffic to your website is only half of the equation. The other half is conversion, turning visitors into new patients. Thankfully, your blog can help with both.

However, until you see the benefits of making regular blog posts, blogging will simply be one more guilt-producing task added to a schedule already burdened by too many things to do. Here are some of the significant benefits you'll enjoy by regularly blogging:

## Personal Expression

Think of your blog as your own printing press, editorial page and soapbox all rolled into one. It's a platform for self-expression and addressing the subjects that are meaningful to you and your audience of current and prospective new patients.

Often the temptation is take on the safe, politically-correct topics. But that's boring. Blogging is about taking a stand, stirring the pot, being thought provoking and interesting. Do this from time to time and you'll create the "buzz" and the repeat visitors that tell search engines to pay attention.





## New Patients

Ultimately, getting new patients is about your ability to create authority, communicate trust and inspire hope. Blogging can help you do all three.

When a prospective patient can learn about you and your philosophy, it generates a sense of authority and expertise. As you engage new patients on your blog, you send a powerful signal to search engines that your website is relevant and worthy of high rankings. High rankings, quality traffic and meaningful content is the trifecta of great website performance.

And don't forget the comments, testimonials, reviews and recommendations generated by delighted patients. Authentic contributions from current patients can go a long way in winning over a prospective new patient to pick up the telephone.



## Creating Community

Blogging is a conversation. You'll make a post. Someone will comment. You'll respond back. Someone else chimes in and magic happens. This level of engagement and sense of community just isn't possible with private email. Many chiropractors discover that they have far greater engagement from their patients on their blog than during the course of typical patient visit.

## Reference Material

If you're like most chiropractors, there's an exercise you frequently recommend. Or a helpful procedure for dealing with headaches. Or a question you get asked that can't be adequately answered during the course of a patient's visit. Post it on your blog. Then, all you have to do is write the permalink URL on the back of your business card and give it to the patient.

Or maybe you have a riff on breastfeeding, pillows, vaccinations, hydration; you name it. Write it up, post it, refine it and refer to it as needed.

## Search Engines

Search engines love fresh, new, original content. That's why search engines love blogs. The original posts that you (or your team) make, have tremendous value:



### **More is more**

All things being equal, search engines give greater authority (ranking) to sites with more content. Especially if that content is unique.



### **Increased time on site**

Another metric used by search engines to evaluate your site is how long visitors spend on a page. Longer is better. Original, relevant content means visitors linger longer.



### **Increased pages visited**

Search engines conclude that the more pages a visitor consumes, the more trusted the content. Trust means authority and authority means better search engine ranking.

# What Should I Blog About?



As a Perfect Patients client, we'll be supplying weekly posts on your behalf. That's a start, but you unleash the full power of your blog by making your own blog posts.

That's because, while the posts we make on your behalf can engage visitors and educate current patients, since we publish the same post across our entire network, our posts don't produce the search engine authority that your original blog posts will have.

Now, if the idea of writing a blog post conjures up the specter of high school English composition class, relax! Here are some ideas to get you going. One or more of these approaches could become your version of my own [\*\*Monday Morning Motivation!\*\*](#)

## **Google Alerts**

Sign up for Google alerts. Let's say you're seeing great results with iodine supplementation. Tell Google that you want to be notified whenever the topic of iodine is added to the web. Each day you'll get links to sites that contain that keyword. Post a short critique on your blog or a suggestion for your patients to go read it.

Scour the pages of [\*\*WebMd.com\*\*](#) or [\*\*Mercola.com\*\*](#) and look for content that you can write about. (Don't repost the content. That can create duplicate content penalties and give the false impression you wrote it. Instead, simply provide a link to the original content.)





## Case studies

Have you had a patient recently recover their hearing? Or conceive after years of trying? Or had a wonderful resolution of migraine headaches? Write a paragraph or two about the case. You don't even have to use the patient's name. Speak in general terms about the patient's age, background, experience, your program of care and what happened. Write up a paragraph or two about a recent patient that you helped. Even a typical, routine case can have tremendous value.

## Why I love my city

When someone searches for a chiropractor, search engines know it's a local search. So, show up as the local chiropractic authority and the local authority in your community by writing about your favorite haunts, popular sights, preferred restaurants, community events and the like. Express yourself and be seen as an expert.

## Write a short profile

Describe a procedure, therapy or service you provide. With the appropriate permissions, write a short profile on your oldest patient, youngest patient, the patient who travels the furthest, the patient you've seen the longest, etc. Write about what interests you, inspires you and makes chiropractic so fulfilling.

## Rant or rave

Something got your hackles up? Your website is a convenient outlet that you can use to vent your opinion about some issue that has you fired up. Especially if that topic is about something going on in your community. Better if it relates somehow to health, but not essential.



### **Wednesday wellness tips**

Brainstorm 52 topics that can help enhance the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of patients and prospective patients. Or, create a list of tips related to nutrition, exercise, sleep, children's health, weight loss and the like. Make them short and sweet. Create 10 or 12 of them at a time and set the publication dates in advance to automatically post for you.

### **Frequently asked questions**

Brainstorm a list of frequently asked questions about chiropractic, your practice, your education and the like.

### **From the desk of Dr. [YourName]**

Use your blog to address some of the questions you get at your report of findings or your front desk staff receives on the telephone. Don't get asked questions? Make some up. When you are asked a question by a patient, "That's a great question. Let me write up my answer and I'll post it on our blog."





## How Long Should My Posts Be?

The research is unclear about what constitutes the perfect blog post length. But one thing is certain. It must be engaging—something that will compel others to stay and read. The longer they're on the page, the better.

Studies show that most people read text on a monitor in the 180 to 200 words per minute range. That's about a minute to minute and a half. Avoid filler material to artificially lengthen your posts. Presented with a long block of text, many will quickly leave if they suspect that digging through your post will be more work than it's worth, or doesn't hold the promise of delivering what they're looking for.

For those who aren't professional writers, creating spellbinding material longer than 200 to 300 words is challenging. Incidentally, the sample post about D. D. Palmer's first adjustment that we'll be using as a demonstration is about 275 words. That might be a length worth shooting for. (Notice how the short paragraphs and subheads pique interest, improves browsability and enhances readability.)

Adding photographs (with captions) and video to your blog posts can be especially effective in engaging the visitor and lingering to consume your content. Just be sure you have the rights to use it and you're not infringing on copyright law.



# How Frequently Should I Post?

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Frequency doesn't seem to be quite as important as regularity. In other words, consistency is important. The Internet is littered with blogs that have only one or two posts. Or a spurt of posts that came to an abrupt end 18 months ago.

*That said, even one original post is better than no post at all.*

Some professional bloggers make several posts a day! Political pundits will often make daily posts. But probably a more realistic goal would be to aim for making one post a week. If a week passes and you don't have anything to share, don't beat yourself up! But between the weekly posts we make on your behalf, and your weekly posts, patients (and search engines) will get the idea that something important is happening and they should pay attention. Very helpful.





*One way to make sure you have some regularity to your posting is to brainstorm subjects and write them in advance.*

For myself, I like the security of having six to nine months of weekly Monday Morning Motivations in the pipeline and ready to go. That way, if something doesn't inspire me that week, I know that at least one post is ready to go.

The point is, you don't need the stress of trying to write something with a deadline staring you in the face. Having a couple of articles in cold storage is great comfort in case nothing worth writing about shows up in your Google Alerts or the health-oriented sites that you monitor and comment about.

Once you miss a week or two, it's easy to lose your mojo and the momentum and hard earned authority you've won, is lost.



## Making Your First Post

Visit our support page to see the step-by-step process to publish your first post using the Perfect Patients blogging function.

**Click here to visit the blog post section of our Support Site**



## Alerting the World About Your Post

You've invested your blood, sweat and tears and created something special that your community and your patients should know about.

Now what?

This is when you'll want to put on your marketing hat and get the word out about your fantastic new post.







Posting to Twitter is even easier. Just be conscious of the character count and leave room for the permalink URL. (If the permalink uses up too many characters, use a URL-shortening resource such as <http://tinyurl.com>.)

## Use Your PS Message

PS. Man's hearing restored! A fluke accident? Or powerful new healing discipline? You be the judge. Read "Davenport Local Regains Hearing," the most recent blog post from D.D. Palmer: [http://www.palmer.com/davenport\\_local\\_regains\\_hearing](http://www.palmer.com/davenport_local_regains_hearing)

Using the PS messaging above will probably suffice for most blog posts and avoids “email fatigue” in which recipients choose not to open your emails because there are too many of them.

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## Use Your Front Desk

Create a template so you can print four or six little handouts for the front desk advertising your blog post. It can be the same content as your PS message or single-topic email. Hand one out to every patient.

As you become known for great content, you'll create a larger and larger following. And before you know it, your following will enlarge, your authority will increase and the referral process becomes even more effective!



## But I'm Not a Writer

No problem. You don't have to be. A blog post can be something as short as this paragraph. Being confronted by "writer's block" is just another way of saying, "I don't have anything to say right now." So, if you're not a writer, here are some ideas that can help you get this critically important original content created and posted on your website:

### One of your team members

You may have a budding writer on your team who would relish the opportunity to write about natural health topics. Presto! Problem solved.

### One or more of your patients

You probably have a blogger or two amongst your patient base. Some may write for free in exchange for the authorship link on your site. Others may want some nominal fee. The going rate for a custom 200-word post is about USD \$15. A bargain.

### Outsource the writing

As blogging has become an increasingly important strategic SEO tool, it has spawn an entire industry of freelance writers ready to create custom blogs. Prices (and quality) vary.

### Perfect Patients blogging service

If even the thought of writing a postcard-length blog post seems daunting, our custom blogging service might be helpful. (Premium Plan only.) Each month we'll conduct some brief interviews on the telephone and our writers will fashion them into original blog posts for you. ***Problem solved.***

## Get Blogging!

Hope this brief explanation has removed the mystery surrounding your Perfect Patients blog. Here are the major takeaways:

- ✓ Blog about topics that interest you and you think will interest others.
- ✓ Blogging is simple and the tools you use are intuitive and easy to learn.
- ✓ Blogging is a way to enhance the new patient performance of your site.
- ✓ A blog improves patient engagement and stimulates conversation.
- ✓ Your blog can be the receptacle for content you refer to again and again.
- ✓ Blogging fresh, original content increases the authority of your website.
- ✓ Blog on a regular basis to keep your audience fed with your latest insights.
- ✓ Your site includes built-in ways to alert your tribe about your blog posts.
- ✓ There are many ways to secure original content for your blog.

# Blogging is fun! So get started today.