

California Chiropractors and Peptides — Short Legal Analysis

Bottom line: A California chiropractic license does not authorize a chiropractor to purchase, prescribe, dispense, administer, or sell prescription or compounded peptides to patients.

California law specifically prohibits chiropractors from using drugs or medicines included in materia medica. The Chiropractic Initiative Act § 7 and 16 CCR § 302 make clear that the practice of chiropractic does not include the practice of medicine or the use of prescription drugs.

California regulations also prohibit chiropractors from penetrating human tissue, which means a chiropractor cannot personally inject peptides.

What a Chiropractor Can Sell

A chiropractor may generally recommend or sell legitimate:

- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Amino acids
- Nutritional products
- Food supplements
- Lawfully marketed dietary supplements

That exception does not convert prescription, compounded, injectable, or investigational peptides into chiropractic nutritional products.

Prescription and Compounded Peptides

Products such as BPC-157, CJC-1295, ipamorelin, TB-500, sermorelin, semaglutide, tirzepatide, and similar pharmaceutical peptides should not be purchased or sold under the authority of a California chiropractic license.

California pharmacy law separately regulates prescription or “dangerous” drugs. Chiropractors are not included among the healthcare practitioners authorized to prescribe dangerous drugs under Business & Professions Code § 4059.

Therefore, a chiropractor cannot simply establish a pharmaceutical account, purchase prescription peptides as inventory, and resell them to chiropractic patients.

Having Someone Else Inject It Does Not Solve the Problem

A chiropractor should also be cautious about an arrangement where:

- Chiropractor recommends or sells peptide → another provider performs the injection.
- The fact that the chiropractor does not personally inject the substance does not necessarily bring the transaction within chiropractic scope. Recommending, furnishing, selling, or directing pharmaceutical treatment can still create a scope-of-practice problem.
- Likewise, calling a peptide “research use only” or “not for human consumption” does not provide meaningful protection when it is actually being marketed to patients for healing, weight loss, anti-aging, recovery, pain, or another therapeutic purpose.

Potential Consequences

This is not merely a technical scope issue. Practicing outside the Chiropractic Initiative Act can expose a chiropractor to Board discipline, and violations of the Act can also carry misdemeanor consequences under § 15.

Practical Rule

Legitimate nutritional supplements = generally permissible.

Prescription, compounded, injectable, or therapeutically marketed peptides = medical/pharmaceutical practice, not chiropractic practice.

A chiropractor who wants to participate financially in a peptide, hormone, anti-aging, or medical-weight-loss business should have the operation separately structured through appropriately licensed medical professionals and pharmacies, with careful consideration of California's corporate-practice-of-medicine and fee-splitting laws.

A California DC license itself should not be used as the authority to purchase or sell pharmaceutical peptides.

Damien Fertitta DC Esq

www.law-doc.com

530.510.8112