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Generation Rescue
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CranioSacral Therapy:
Its Role in Autism Recovery & Childhood Development

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Infancy & Development

- Birth Process
- The large spaces, also called fontanelles are there to allow space for rapid growth and development
- What happens when these bones are not in the correct place?
- How would a parent know their child is suffering?

Discover CranioSacral Therapy (CST)

- Developed by Dr. Upledger an Osteopathic Physician in the 1970's. CST is used to evaluate and enhance the functioning of the physiological body system called the craniosacral system.
- Some of the first patients were those with Autism. CST treats the associated brain dysfunction of autism.
- Craniosacral System:
  - Cranial Bones
  - Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF)
  - Membranes
- The craniosacral system helps balance the nervous system

Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

The ANS comprises the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. These two systems must be balanced.

- Common signs and Sx's of can be explained by ANS dysfunctions that include
  - elevated heart rate and/or blood pressure
  - feeding problems
  - nausea
  - vomiting
  - abdominal bloating
  - constipation and/or diarrhea
  - dark/light intolerance
  - dry eyes
  - dilated pupils
  - sleep apnea
  - abnormal sweating patterns
  - dry skin
  - dilated pupils
  - high fever
  - insomnia
  - bed-wetting
  - difficulty urinating
  - difficulty potty- training
  - poor social skills
  - phobias
  - tics
  - emotional instability

The Rhythm

CSF is produced within the brain itself and is reabsorbed once reaching a certain pressure gradient. The brain contracts at a normal rate of 6 to 12 cycles per minute, creating the craniosacral rhythm.

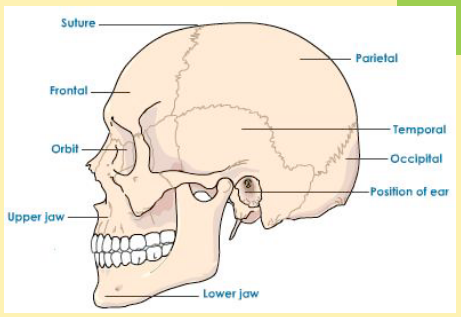
Neurosurgeons recognize the meninges (membranes) pulsate.

This rhythm is detected by the practitioner and used to help relieve the restrictions and imbalances that exist in the craniosacral system.

CST Treatment

- CST is performed by a person trained in the technique.
- This is a gentle, hands-on technique using the weight of a nickel. The practitioner places their hands on the cranial bones and monitors the rhythm detecting potential locations where restrictions and imbalances are held in the tissues. Then, a gentle stretch is placed upon these tissues to help soften, lengthen and release restrictions.
- Treatment is aimed at the membranes and helping to improve flow and exchange of fluids, it is not about realigning the cranial bones.

Cranial Bones

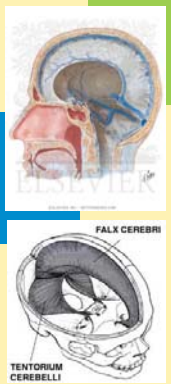


CSF

Purpose:
Delivers nutrients, O2, hormones, neurotransmitters and transports waste/toxins away.

Membranes

- There are three layers of membranes. The main tissue involved is the Dura Mater "tough mother", the outermost layer of the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord.
- Purpose:
  - Protect the brain and spinal cord.
  - Facilitate the electro-chemical conduction of nerve signals.



Restrictions

- Contractures in the membrane create the restrictions, this can be in the skull or along the spinal cord. The cranial bones keep these tissues in their lesion patterns due to the anatomical connections of the bones and tissues.
- We use the cranial bones as a handle to get to the underlying tissues.
- What does a restriction feel like to my child?

How Do You Get Restrictions?

- Vacuum extraction
- Forceps delivery
- Cesarean section
- Difficult labor
- Twin
- Breech
- Surgery
- Stress to nervous system
- Normal childhood falls
- Self-injurious behavior
- Trauma (birth or otherwise)
- Infections/Illness

What We See In Our Kids

- Sleep issues
- Processing problems
- Delayed milestones
- Aggression
- Attention difficulty
- Abnormal neurotransmitters
- Detoxification issues
- Inflammation
- Speech delays
- Chronic inflammation
- Birth trauma
- Sensory processing problems
- Trouble concentrating
- Hyperactivity

CST's Relation to Autism

According to Upledger, ASD is related in part to a loss of flexibility and probable inflammation of the membrane layers surrounding the brain.

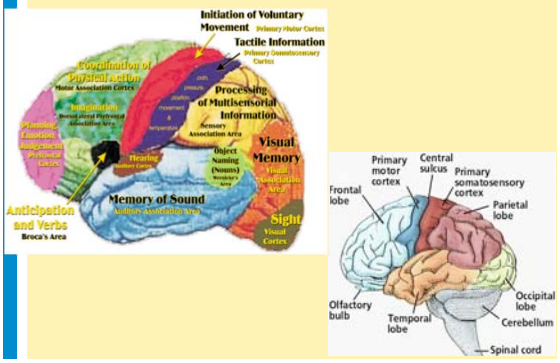
What we know:

1. Increased levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, neuroglial activation and inflammatory changes in the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) of ASD children studied at Johns Hopkins.

2. Restrictive force on the brain tissue can cause strain on different brain structures and the osteopathic model states dysfunction follows.

3. Behavioral challenges can be associated with specific brain area dysfunction. (ie sleep, body temperature, stress response, emotions, sensory input, motor coordination)

Areas of the Brain & Behavior



Is Development Impaired?

- Development can be impaired in the portion of the cranium that has restrictions.
- Is it ever too late to get CST?

Benefits

- CST has been shown to help the individual with autistic features gain a calmer and more relaxed state of being by decreasing structural stress and strain.
- When motion to the membranes is balanced the surrounding brain tissues can flush toxins and inflammation out of the brain tissue. This detoxification naturally elevates biochemical processing, increasing the functioning of neurological pathways.
- The increased functioning of neuro pathways allows increased processing.
- CST elevates the body's natural healing and compensatory mechanisms by facilitating neurological function.
- Normalizes the nervous system.

Indications for CST

- Self-injurious behaviors
- Stress behaviors- sympathetic dominance
- Sensory motor behaviors- pressure
- Symptoms: high fevers, ear infections, chronic illness and vaccine administrations
- Birth Injury/Birth Trauma
- Cranial surgery, helmet
- Poor sleeper
- Bowel issues (bed-wetting, constipation)
- Decreased attention
- Hyperactivity

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