

PEDIATRIC AILMENTS

ADHD

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a relatively common condition that tends to emerge in children during their early school years. The most common signs of ADHD are:

- Inattention
- Hyperactivity
- Impulsive Behavior
- Difficulty Concentrating

It is estimated that between three and five percent of children have ADHD - approximately two million children in the United States - and is much more common in boys than girls. This means that in a classroom of 25 to 30 children, it is likely that at least one will have ADHD. However, because many normal children may show some of these same behaviors as well, it is important that a child receive a thorough examination and appropriate diagnosis before any treatment is considered.

It is not entirely certain what causes ADHD, but the current thought is that it is a combination of an overactive nervous system, coupled with a decrease in the brain's ability to filter out extraneous sights, sounds, thoughts and emotions. Although chiropractors don't directly treat ADHD, there are a number of things that your chiropractor can do to help eliminate things that stress a child's nervous system, such as:

- Remove spinal subluxations that irritate the nervous system
- Suggest dietary changes to avoid common problem foods
- Test for allergies that may be stressing the nervous system
- Suggest changes to the home to help reduce exposure to toxic chemicals

The most common medical treatment is the use of the drug methylphenidate, also known as Ritalin. Ritalin is actually a stimulant drug that normally speeds up the activity of the nervous system. But for reasons that are not entirely clear, it tends to have a calming effect on those who suffer from ADHD; possibly by increasing the activity in the area of the brain responsible for filtering out extraneous sensation. The problem with taking Ritalin is that it does not do anything to resolve the cause of the ADHD, it only masks the symptoms. Continued use of Ritalin over long periods of time has also been shown to have detrimental effects on the brain itself. It is important as a parent to look at all treatment options before placing your child on Ritalin and chiropractic care is a great place to start. Contact us today!

Bedwetting

A number of clinical research studies demonstrate that chiropractic care can help with bedwetting by removing any irritation that may be affecting the nerves that control bladder function.

Bedwetting is stressful for everyone involved. Lack of bladder control can cause embarrassment, shame, and interfere with normal social development. All of the causes of bed-wetting are not fully understood. There are children whose bladders are underdeveloped for their age and who have difficulty recognizing when their bladder is full. This is much more common in children under four years of age.

If a child, who had been dry at night for a period of time - weeks or months - suddenly starts bed-wetting again, this may be a sign that something is wrong. Most often this happens when some form of stress is in the child's life: a new baby in the home, moving to a new neighborhood, or a divorce. Bedwetting may also be a sign of physical or sexual abuse or some other disease process. If your child wets the bed after having been dry at night in the past, it is important that they be seen by a doctor. The bed-wetting may be a sign that stress or a disease is causing the problem.

Chiropractic can help by removing any irritation that may be affecting the nerves that control bladder function. These nerves exit an area of the spine called the Sacrum. In adults, the sacrum is one large fused bone that is very resistant to injury. However, during childhood, the sacrum is separated into five individual segments. If these segments become misaligned, due to a fall or other type of trauma, they can compromise the nerves that are responsible for bladder function. While chiropractic is not typically a treatment for bedwetting, countless children have been helped by being adjusted. In fact, a number of clinical research studies have demonstrated that chiropractic care can help many children suffering from bedwetting.

Colic

Colic is a condition in young infants characterized by an unusual amount of crying. When they cry, they may draw their arms and legs toward their bodies as though they are in pain and may even turn bright red. Colic usually appears between the 3rd and 6th week after birth and is typically resolved by the time they are 3 months old. Although no one is certain what causes colic, there are a number of things that likely contribute, such as an immature and irritated nervous system, food sensitivities and gastrointestinal upset.

The theory that an irritated spine may contribute to colic is supported by the frequent improvement in symptoms with gentle chiropractic adjustments. Because the birthing process is very stressful on the neck of a newborn, it is very common for there to be several subluxations in the neck and back that can irritate the tiny and delicate nervous system. It has also been observed that babies with colic seem to need more attention and are more sensitive to the things around them than other babies - again indicating that there are some neurological differences.

Both the mother's and the baby's diet can be huge factors in the development of colic. One of the biggest offenders is cow's milk. Babies should not have cow's milk, or dairy in any form for that matter, until they are at least two or three years old. Cow's milk contains the sugar lactose which

many newborn babies cannot digest very well, not to mention that cow's milk contains many proteins that are not good for an infant's digestive system.

Another potential dietary contributor to colic is the mother's diet while breastfeeding. Women who breast feed should stay away from spicy foods, alcohol and tobacco, as well as to avoid eating too much of any one particular food. A semi-bland, high-protein diet that excludes dairy is probably best - at least during the first three or four months of breastfeeding.

If your baby suffers from colic, there are a few things that you can do to help:

- Seek regular chiropractic care, especially during the first four months.
- Place a warm water bottle on your baby's stomach.
- Rock your baby in a rocking chair or cradle.
- Give your baby a warm bath.
- Gently rub your baby's stomach.
- Go for a drive with your baby in the car seat.
- Feed your baby more often with less food at each feeding.
- If you feed your baby formula, avoid soy or dairy-based formulas.

Ear Infections

If your child experiences recurrent ear infections, chiropractic can help by restoring normal drainage of the lymphatic vessels.

Almost half of all children will suffer from at least one middle ear infection (otitis media) before they're a year old, and two-thirds of them will have had at least one episode by age three. The symptoms of otitis media include ear pain, fever, and irritability. If you look into the ear of a child who has otitis media, you will be able to see a buildup of fluid behind the ear drum, and the inside of the ear will appear inflamed. Otitis media is caused by either a bacterial or viral infection and frequently results from another illness such as a cold. For many children, it can become a chronic problem, requiring treatment year after year, and putting the child at risk of permanent hearing damage and associated speech and developmental problems.

Otitis media commonly emerges when there is improper drainage of the lymph system in the neck, or when the muscle that is supposed to keep bacteria or viruses from entering the eustacean tubes (the tubes in the back of the throat that lead to the inner ear) doesn't work correctly. While both of these things can happen in adults, it usually does not result in an ear infection for two reasons: First, the shape and the length of the eustacean tubes are different in adults, allowing easier drainage and making it more difficult for a bacteria to invade. Second, adults tend to spend more time upright than young children do, which also encourages better drainage and decreases risk of infection.

In either case, the underlying root cause of otitis media is usually a mechanical problem. There is either a reduced or blocked drainage of the lymph vessels in the neck lymphatic chains that causes a build up of fluid in the inner ear, or a loss of normal function of the small muscle at the opening of the eustacean tube in the throat that allows bacteria and viruses from the mouth to

enter the inner ear. Instead of treatment that tries to kill the bacteria or virus, a more natural approach would be to restore normal drainage of the ears and neck lymphatics. This is most effectively done through chiropractic.

Unfortunately, the current treatment of choice for medical doctors is to prescribe oral antibiotics, usually amoxicillin, which can be helpful to get rid of a bacterial infection. But, according to many research studies, antibiotics are often not much more effective than the body's own immune system. And repeated doses of antibiotics can lead to drug-resistant bacteria.

Most people have heard about the common practice of placing 'tubes in the ears' to relieve the pressure, and therefore pain, of otitis media. During this surgical procedure, a small opening is made in the eardrum and a small tube is placed in the opening. This opening helps to relieve the pressure in the ear and prevents fluid buildup. After a couple of months, the body pushes the tube out and the hole closes. Although the treatment is often effective, it does not address the underlying cause of the infection, which is the abnormal mechanical functioning of the lymphatics, muscles and nerves.

If your child experiences recurrent ear infections, it is important that you talk to your chiropractor. Doctors of chiropractic are licensed and trained to diagnose and treat patients of all ages and will use a gentler type of treatment for children. By helping to restore the normal function of the tissues of the neck, otitis media can usually be significantly reduced or completely eliminated in most children, without the use of antibiotics and surgery.