

Movement is Life and Chiropractic Delivers

James Chestnut, DC

Movement is life.

This may sound a bit strange at first but if you think about it for a moment the truth of this statement begins to become more and more apparent. Without movement you could not sustain life: blood cells that don't move cannot transport oxygen, lungs that don't move can't breathe, hearts that don't move can't pump blood, and spines that don't move can't create the motion required for proper joint nutrition, for the activities of daily living, or for the stimulation of the joint-brain pathways required for proper brain and body function.

You heard correctly, movement (especially of the spine) is required for proper brain function for the coordination of activities such as concentration and learning, emotions, motor control, and organ function (including immune organs).¹⁻² Roger Sperry the recipient of the Nobel prize in 1982 for his work in brain research stated that the importance of movement of the spine in relation to brain function could be equated to that of a windmill that generates electricity for a powerplant. He also stated that the more structurally distorted we are, the less energy we have for metabolism, for healing, and for thinking.

In fact research has shown that if you cut off the supply of somatosensory information going to the brain, the brain will actually reach a state of coma!!³ That's right, the brain does not simply control the body, the brain requires constant stimulation; it requires constant input from movement to keep the batteries charged.

Did you know that over half of all the nerve impulses being sent between your brain and body in your spinal cord are for the delivery of movement stimulation to the brain?⁴ Movement charges your brain's battery and makes you able to think better, feel better, and function better.

Sound a bit too good to be true? Don't just take my word for it, read the work of some of the most prominent neurologists, physiologists, psychologists, and educators in the world. Messages to your brain created by proper movement (especially of your spine) have been called an essential nutrient for brain function and development.⁵ In fact, research is now

showing that people who do not properly stimulate their brain with joint movement have learning, memory, emotional, behavioral, and overall health deficits.

This is especially true for children because spinal joint receptor stimulation plays an integral role in the development of the child's brain and nervous system and the effects of decreased stimulation of the brain in childhood have been linked to central motor impairment, developmental impairments, learning disabilities, concentration problems like ADHD, behavioral problems such as violence and increased illnesses such as ear, nose, and throat infections, sleeping difficulties, and colic. 6-7

"Connectivity is a crucial feature of brain development because the neural pathways formed during the early years carry signals that allow us to process information throughout our lives (Dixon and Shore)." 7

At first researchers thought that it was just the exercise that improved brain and overall health due to increased blood flow and oxygen supply etc. Further research has shown that aerobic activity is not what is responsible for the amazing benefits of proper movement stimulation of the brain. It is the neurological stimulation of the pathways between moving joints, especially spinal joints, and the brain that are responsible. "At a major neuroscience symposium in Chicago where experts in the field of movement and cognition met the message was clear: Our body enriches our mind". 7

Chiropractic Delivers!!!

It should be obvious why it is so important to ensure every child has a properly moving and aligned spine as the spinal joints are the main source of sensory movement stimulation to the brain. If there is subluxation in the spine, movement and therefore essential nutrient delivery to the brain are compromised.

The upper neck has been found to be particularly important to examine because it is the most easily damaged (birth trauma, falls, poor sleeping postures) and it has by far the most movement receptors to stimulate the brain.4,6

These findings have been confirmed by clinical studies performed by both chiropractors and medical doctors. In fact after examining thousands of children one medical researcher concluded that "observations of motor development and manual control of the occipito-atlanto-axial (upper neck) joint complex should be obligatory after every difficult birth". He

also states that the upper neck "should be examined and, if required, specifically adjusted ... (as) the success of adjustment overshadows every other type of treatment." 6 Of course it does, a specific adjustment is the ONLY way to correct a subluxation!!!

As pediatric chiropractors we are all very familiar with this type of work and have all personally seen great results with the care we provide to children. The problem is that much of society is unaware of the pathogenic potential of subluxation and far too many children are suffering needlessly. It is up to all of us as individuals to disseminate this information and to support organizations such as the I.C.P.A. that are dedicated to educating both the public and the chiropractors in the field.

I recommend combining specific adjustments with some sound nutritional advice and some fun 'Brain Gym' exercises to ensure that each child gets the best possible chance to have a healthy body and mind.

Not only does proper spinal movement increase overall health, decrease dis-ease and improve the ability to create feelings of happiness and well-being, it also helps to reduce pain and discomfort and to diminish feelings of anxiety and stress. When it comes right down to it we are creatures designed for virtually constant movement living in a society that involves almost constant sitting. We are also clearly designed to have properly moving and aligned spines and many of our citizens are unknowingly walking around with subluxation in their spines because they have NEVER HAD A SPINAL HEALTH EXAM!! This is not a healthy combination and the result is that we have a population that is much less healthy and much more sick, tired, and dis-ease ridden than is necessary.

Please get yourselves and the children out and moving around. Everyone will feel better, think better, have a healthier spine, have increased overall health, and enjoy a much greater quality of life. All children (and adults of course) deserve a wonderful quality of life and proper spinal movement is an integral part of this. Motion is lotion, movement is life, and chiropractic delivers so get out there and get those spines moving!!!!

The information in this article is taken from Dr. Chestnut's book "The 14 Foundational Premises for the Scientific and Philosophical Validation of the Chiropractic Wellness Paradigm" This 145 page fully referenced book can be ordered through the I.C.P.A. for \$100, \$20 from each book sale will be donated to the I.C.P.A.

Access references and info www.icpa4kids.com/chiropractic_newsletter_references.htm

