

THE HEALING HANDS THAT GIVE

WHY DOES MY CHILD NEED CHIROPRACTIC CARE?

You'll probably never see your five or six-year-old bend over to pick up a toy and freeze in pain saying, "Oh, my back went out again." Spinal degenerations and vertebral subluxations that cause that kind of pain will generally not appear in children – but it started there.

Birth Trauma

Natural childbirth has come to mean many different things, but for the purpose of this article let's keep it simple and say that it is a drug-free, vaginal delivery. Even with no pitocin, no epidural, the mother walking regularly to help the contractions, and no extraction methods being used, childbirth causes stress to a still-developing spine.

Add to this the improper lifting of the child out of a car seat or during a diaper changing; and minor spinal traumas are occurring that affect the spine and nervous system causing common newborn health complaints:

- Colic
- Unexplained crying
- Poor appetite
- Earaches or ear infections
- Colds
- Allergic reactions

Even a minor spinal trauma will affect the nervous system and interfere with your child's normal healthy function.

Learning to Walk

When a child first learns to stand up they tend to use a coffee table, a couch, mom or dad's fingers, whatever is in reach to pull themselves to their feet. Once they're up there, how do they get down? That's right; they plop down onto their bottom and crawl away.

When they're starting to take their first few venturous steps toward walking they stand next to the table or couch, wobble back and forth a little bit, take one or two hesitant steps toward the middle of the room and,

once again, plop onto their bottom. In some instances, the child doesn't make it far enough away from the table or chair and hits their head on furniture. These constant and repeated jars to the spine will not in themselves cause a major spinal injury, but as they accumulate repetitive stress injuries do occur.

Exploring Their Surroundings

During the first few years of life, children will develop from helpless infants into fearless adventurers. Bumps and falls naturally come with your child's desire to learn everything about the world around them in the quickest amount of time possible, but these bumps and falls will cause trauma to the spine. When spinal bones lose their normal position or ability to move during this stage of tremendous physical growth, possible permanent deformities can occur. Left uncorrected, these small cumulative traumas can have far-reaching effects.

While a Doctor of Chiropractic doesn't treat or cure illnesses, many common childhood disorders may be the result of nervous system interference or malfunction caused by spine related problems, such as:

- Hyperactivity
- Learning disorders
- Bedwetting
- Allergies
- Asthma

This is just the tip of the iceberg, but appropriate Chiropractic care can help locate and correct these problems and restore normal spinal and nervous system function.

The Vertebral Subluxation Complex

As you can see, our children bump and jar their spine constantly in the first five years of life, and after that their normal everyday activities can cause the vertebrae that protect the spine to lose their normal motion or position.

Each of these spinal traumas cause lasting effects: delicate nerve tissue can be damaged resulting in interference with the brain's ability to send nerve impulses to organs, tissues and muscles; discs, blood vessels and other soft tissues can swell and become inflamed; the body may respond with bone spurs and other abnormal bone growth; and various systems through the body may malfunction.

In each of these examples, pain or other obvious symptoms may not be present at the time, yet optimum health and well-being have been compromised.

Your Child's Developing Spine

There are three windows of time in which your child's spine will go through major stages of development. The first of these is birth through age five. This is definitely the most critical time since it is during this period that the child also has the most minor traumas and repetitive stress injuries to the spine.

The second window of development is five years to ten years of age. During this time your child will begin school and spend recess climbing on monkey bars, sliding down slides, playing organized sports and generally leaving themselves open to repeated falls and tumbles resulting in their own spinal injuries. Finally, at age ten to fifteen-years-old, your child's spine will go through its last stage of development. During this final stage, your child's spinal growth will be greatly affected by most if not all of the following:

- Improper backpack loading and carrying
- Poor posture
- An inactive or sedentary lifestyle
- Repetitive sports movements
- Typical sports injuries
- Being hit in the head with a ball
- Tackled on the field
- Falling off a skateboard or rollerblades

It may be possible that you missed the first window of opportunity for care, but it's not too late; your child or teenager can benefit from Chiropractic care.

The Benefits of Chiropractic Care

Even as the public is becoming more aware of the benefit of early detection and care of the Vertebral Subluxation Complex, the odds are that you were looking for pain relief for yourself as an adult when you first went to see your Family Wellness Chiropractor. During your initial examination it's possible that a certain Phase of Degeneration was detected. If you were informed that you are at Phase 1 then the original damage to your spine was likely ten to twenty years ago. If you were at Phase 2, the original damage to your spine was probably about twenty to forty years ago.

Basically, if you first saw your Chiropractor when you were in your late twenties and you're at a Phase 1 of degeneration, then the damage to your spine originated when you were a child. So, the most obvious answer to the question of why your child may need Chiropractic care is: avoid having your child suffer the same pain that first brought you in to see a Chiropractor. Spinal problems that go undetected or neglected in children become more serious problems as adults.

In Summary

As a Chiropractic patient you're already aware of the benefits of Chiropractic care. You've experienced for yourself the relief that comes from having a properly aligned spine. Give your child the opportunity that you weren't given: to benefit from the body's innate ability to heal itself and grow up with a healthy spine and nervous system.