

# Chiropractic for Babies



Pediatric Chiropractors have advanced, specialized training in treating newborn babies, toddlers, and young children. They use safe, gentle and specific hands-on techniques to treat biomechanical stress, high tone or tension in the musculoskeletal system which can affect feeding, sleeping, and achieving movement milestones.

## COMMON CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH HIGH TONE, TENSION OR STRESS:

Baby...

- Holds own head up from birth - baby seems strong!
- Hates tummy time
- Hates the car seat
- Has hiccups all the time
- Arches and pulls away from breast or bottle
- Startles easily and wake themselves up
- Trouble with bowel movements
- Wants to stand all the time
- Keeps gagging
- Doesn't open their mouth very wide
- Prefers turning their head one way (Torticollis)
- Is very fussy and difficult to settle
- Isn't rolling or crawling in usual timeframes



## HOW DOES A BABY HAVE BIOMECHANICAL STRESS OR HIGH TENSION?

At first glance, it may not seem plausible that an infant could require biomechanical care. So little time has passed for them to sustain a mechanical injury. You could suspect that birth injuries are rare when obstetric standards are so high; but it's the *subtle* injuries that are often overlooked if there is no presentation of life-threatening conditions.

Routine birth is a blend of compression, torque, and traction. And even a 'natural' delivery can cause trauma to the infant. Injuries sustained during 'precipitous labour' (which occurs under 3 hours) or required assistance or intervention are easier to suspect or identify. However, even infants with no known birthing "trauma" can have mechanical restrictions.

When assessed through skilled palpation, Chiropractors can identify impairments in the dynamic mobility of the articulations of the musculoskeletal system (restrictions in the normal movement of the muscles and joints of the body).

## ***WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY DO?***

Our first step is to get as much information about the baby and mother as possible through a detailed history of pregnancy, birth, and after care, as well as the baby's feeding, sleeping, and other functions. Then we complete a detailed neurological assessment and skilled palpation and biomechanical assessment of the cranium, jaw, spine, and extremities. Positioning and postural observation as well as an assessment of the oral tissues and suck-swallow rhythm is also part of the assessment.

During any assessment or treatment, our focus is keeping the infant as content as possible. Whether that is holding and rocking them while we complete the examination, working while the parent feeds, or breaking up the assessment into 2 parts. We find that if we are able to keep the baby relaxed during our assessment, we can be more thorough and the baby responds more effectively.



The manual therapy we provide is very gentle and comfortable. It utilizes light touch and pressure and very low force methods. Once the area of biomechanical strain or tension is identified, we apply a gentle hold in the direction of required movement, or perform subtle mobilizations of the area.

Parents sometimes ask, "Did you actually do anything?" It is once they see the change in their child's behaviour that they are reassured that there was a therapeutic intervention. Often, only a few treatments are needed.

## ***WHY DO WE LOVE THIS PART OF OUR WORK?***

We love treating these little ones! Why? Because often, with the gentlest of treatments, we can make a profound change in the disposition of the baby and in the health and stress of the whole family.

We also love talking about this topic and all things "parent and baby". Please feel free to ask any questions and let us help you understand as much as possible about your body, your baby, and healthy living.