

Chiropractic Care and Breastfeeding



Did you know that 80-90% of mothers try to breastfeed at birth, but after only one week only 50% of the mothers are still exclusively breastfeeding.¹

Lactation consultants and other health professionals can help mothers and babies overcome their breastfeeding issues.⁵ One healthcare professional that many new mothers turn to for help is their family chiropractor.^{1-4,6}



Why might a chiropractor help with breastfeeding?

Well the answer is really simple. Chiropractors see babies to help improve the way their body and nervous system functions, so they get the best possible start in life.

But why might a baby have problems with the way they move and function? Spending nine months growing in mum's tummy can get really cramped.⁷⁻⁸ The strains baby faces during delivery can cause injuries to baby's spine or nervous system or other joints that doctors and parents may not even be aware of.¹⁰



Successful breastfeeding relies on complex movements involving the spine and jaw.² Babies with problems feeding may have imbalances in the way their spine and jaw is working.⁶

Chiropractic care for kids and babies is safe

So, what does the research tell us about whether chiropractic care may help mothers and babies who are struggling with breastfeeding?

At this stage, large, costly clinical trials haven't been done to really study how much chiropractic care can help, so we can't say for sure how effective it is. But what the research that has been done tells us, is that many mothers who take their babies to chiropractors because they're struggling with breastfeeding, report really good changes after their baby is adjusted.¹

In one study that was conducted in the UK,¹ the researchers followed 114 mothers and babies who presented to a chiropractic teaching clinic for care. All of the babies were under the age of twelve weeks and they were all unable to breastfeed exclusively. The babies were seen by the chiropractic students up to nine times, and the students used low force chiropractic techniques to release tension and improve muscular imbalances.

The researchers were most interested in whether baby would be able to breastfeed exclusively after they received chiropractic care, but they also looked

at the mother's rating of overall improvement and baby's weight gain.

What they found was that all of the children showed some improvement, with over three quarters of them being able to exclusively breastfeed after just two to five chiropractic visits over a two-week period. From a study like this, we don't know how much the placebo effect was involved, and with care provided by chiropractic students, we don't know if the results would have been even better if an experienced chiropractor provided the chiropractic care.

But what we do know, is this study suggests that for some babies with breastfeeding problems, chiropractic care may help mother and baby to breastfeed exclusively, which is a great thing for mother and baby alike.^{1,4} We also know from other research, that when appropriately applied, chiropractic is known to be safe for kids and babies.¹³⁻¹⁴ So, if you're having trouble with breastfeeding, it's a good idea to have your baby checked by a chiropractor to make sure they get the best possible start in life.

Disclaimer and References

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