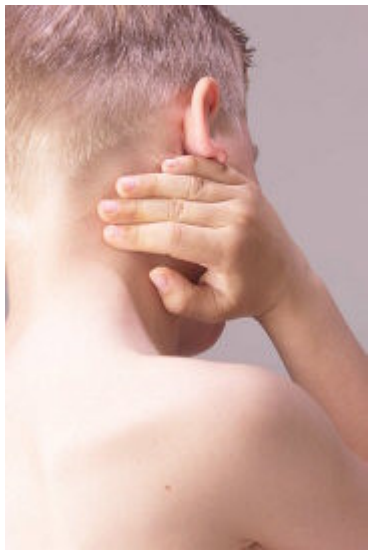
Autism and Chiropractic, Studies Hold Hope



Two separate papers published in two scientific journals hold hope for children with autism through chiropractic care. One paper published in the March 2006 issue of Clinical Chiropractic reviews past studies on chiropractic and Autism. This paper recounts in clinical studies where children with autism are helped with chiropractic care. Most of the studies reviewed speak of problems in the upper cervical (neck) spine.

In addition to the Clinical Chiropractic paper, a study published in the March 9, 2006 Journal of Vertebral Subluxation (JVSR) compares two groups of children with autism and their response under chiropractic care. In this study 14 children diagnosed with autism were studied undergoing chiropractic care. Seven of these children received one form of chiropractic adjustments focusing on the entire spine while the other seven received a form of chiropractic adjustment focusing on the upper cervical spine.

The children in this study were diagnosed with autism at the Child Evaluation Center at the University of Louisville Medical School. The evaluation of any progress made was done by using the Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC) created by the researchers at the Autism Research Institute of San Diego, California. According to the JVSR study, the ATEC is a one-page questionnaire designed to be completed by parents, teachers, or caretakers. It consists of 4 subsets: I. Speech/Language Communication (14 items); II. Sociability (20 items); III. Sensory/Cognitive Awareness (18 items); and IV. Health/Physical/Behavior (25 items).

Each of the children in this study were scored according to the ATEC evaluation. Then, twice each week for the following 3 months, the children were checked and adjusted as indicated. Follow up ATEC evaluations were performed each month to monitor the progress.

The results showed that improvement of ATEC scores occurred in six of the seven children under upper cervical adjustment and in five of the seven children under full spine adjustment. The children in the upper cervical group did show greater score improvements overall. In this group, two of the children improved so much that they no longer met the criteria to be classified as autistic. Overall, the study noted that the most common clinical aspects of improvement were in communication, verbal skills, eye contact, mood, and physical sport skills.