

Craniosacral Therapy Works for Plagiocephaly

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(NaturalNews) Plagiocephaly, or flat head syndrome, is a deformation of the head due to an infant's skull being flattened as a result of pressure from outside forces. Because of the "Back to Sleep" campaign (a campaign encouraging parents to lay their baby on his or her back to decrease the risk of SIDS) there has been an increase in the number of infants with plagiocephaly. Torticollis (head tilt) or incorrect womb positioning can also cause plagiocephaly. The most common treatment for plagiocephaly is having the baby wear a helmet that helps to reshape the baby's head. **A more conservative and very effective option before helmeting is craniosacral therapy (CST).**

Craniosacral therapy is a very gentle practice that evaluates and corrects problems with the craniosacral system, which is made up of the skull, the sacrum, and the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that protect the brain and spinal cord. John Upledger, an osteopathic physician, discovered the craniosacral system and its importance after observing rhythmic motions of cranial bones during a neck surgery he was assisting in. Based on research throughout the 1970's and 1980's, CST was developed as an effective way to eliminate restrictions in the craniosacral system. Numerous conditions, such as migraines, autism, and colic, can be helped with the use of CST.

Because CST promotes optimal shape, size, and movement of the plates of the skull it is very effective in the treatment of plagiocephaly. Using a light touch (about five grams, or less than the weight of a nickel), CST practitioners work to gently mold the plates of the skull to a proper alignment with symmetric rate and rhythm. Because the sutures of the skull are still very malleable in infants, the plates of the skull are quite responsive to this therapy. CST can be used in conjunction with other therapies, especially in the case of torticollis where muscle imbalances need to be addressed.

If left untreated, plagiocephaly can lead to permanent deformations of the skull and facial features. In addition, TMJ dysfunction can occur as well as speech or vision problems. **Because the skull begins to harden around the age of one year it is important that CST and/or helmet therapy is started as soon as possible.**

Craniosacral therapy is a gentle, safe, and effective treatment for plagiocephaly. Because the use of a helmet can be difficult for both babies and parents many parents are turning to this conservative option before having their baby be fitted for a cranial helmet.

Sources:

Plagiocephaly in Infants (<http://infant-toddler-health.suite1...>)

Shaping the Heads of the Future: Natural Options for Plagiocephaly (<http://craniosacralinstitute.com/im...>)

Upledger Institute (<http://www.upledger.com/>)

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