
Headache



Headache is generally considered an adult problem but it is actually very common in children as well. There are numerous reasons why children suffer from headache and chiropractic may offer natural relief for children, and adults, who live with them.

Identifying headache

While older children can tell you if their head hurts babies cannot, so it can be difficult to detect if your baby is suffering from headache. Some signs to watch for are pulling their ears, twisting and contorting their bodies, not wanting to look straight ahead and inconsolable crying. While many parents give paracetamol to calm the child this is not the solution to the problem.

Why do children get headaches?

There are a number of common reasons why a child may suffer from headache, some of these include sinus or viral infections affecting the ears and respiratory system. Also, children who are in stressful situations where they feel unable to cope may be prone to headaches.

Another common cause which may contribute to a child's headache is allergy and sensitivity to certain food items. In rare instances headache in children can be a symptom of a more serious problem. It is important that if your child suffers from headaches, and has symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, clumsiness, changed personality or over tiredness you should seek medical advice to determine the cause.

Subluxation

While many things can trigger headaches by far the most common cause is a functional, mechanical spinal issue. A condition chiropractors refer to as subluxation.

The vertebral, or spinal subluxation involves abnormal changes in the function of a joint. A subluxation results in the nervous system not functioning as well as it should. For example, the muscles of the neck are controlled by nerves that come from the spine, which are in turn controlled by the brain. A joint problem in the neck or skull may irritate the nerves that directly supply these muscles and lead to tightness and discomfort. As the child runs around and plays all day, these muscles become fatigued and headache may result. This spinal/muscular type of headache is commonly referred to as stress headache.

When spinal joints are not functioning properly and muscles are tighter than they should be, there may also be a small change in other functions such as blood flow to the brain. This may result in severe headache, a condition referred to as migraine. In school age children, migraine may sometimes present as abdominal pain and nausea, but no headache. Children with abdominal migraine become very inactive and want to sit around and be quiet.

Treatment

A chiropractor is specifically trained to find and correct vertebral subluxations that cause nerve interference.

If your child has a headache, your chiropractor will take a detailed history, do a thorough examination and may have an x-ray taken. In cases where the subluxation is the cause of the headache, your chiropractor is well trained to apply very safe and gentle techniques to correct it. Your chiropractor may also help you identify any factors such as food sensitivity or allergy which may be contributing to your child's headache.

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