



Chiropractic Newsletter

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The Case for Improved Function

ADD and ADHD have become one of the most controversial health topics of our time. The alarming rise in diagnosis and drug-based treatment raises many concerns. It has been estimated that more than 6 million children including toddlers are being prescribed drugs for treatment. Between 2000 and 2005, ADHD drug prescriptions rose by almost 12 percent each year according to the CDC.

Many parents have legitimate concerns about the current treatment for ADHD. Current media exposure has led even more parents to question its safety. The CBS news special, *HealthWatch: ADHD Drug Warning*, associated the risk of heart attack with Ritalin use. Dr. Jennifer Ashton, CBS's physician spokesperson, expressed good reason for concern and recommended safer, alternative models of care, such as chiropractic and nutrition.

ADHD is classified as a neurobiological disorder. Therefore to get to the cause one must address the neurological system. That being said, it is important to understand that there are three major stressors to our nerve system function:

physical, emotional and chemical. Chiropractors sometimes call these the Three T's: Traumas, Thoughts and Toxins. An overload of any of these stressors, the most obvious being physical trauma, has a major impact on central nerve system function via spinal misalignment. Even micro-traumas such as poor posture and positioning affect spinal alignment, directly impacting nerve system function. Stressful thoughts and emotions have a direct relationship with body physiology as well. We know they overstimulate tension patterns in the muscles, but they may directly impair the integrity of nerve system communication in other ways. Toxic overload, due to chemicals in food, water, and prescription drugs also affects



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our body's normal nerve system function (prescription drugs having the explicit purpose to alter neuro-chemistry).

What consequences do we risk by alienating ourselves from the nervous system's natural setting and function? Further distress to the central nervous system (CNS). Effective communication between the brain and body through the CNS allows a variety of neurological, biological, and physiological functions to happen. Furthermore, spinal misalignments via the three T's has a compounding effect on neurology as the body compensates with altered movement patterns. A decrease in the normal range of spinal movement can result in a loss of proprioceptive activity which is vital for the nerve system to self-regulate and ensure optimal brain function.

When a child is exhibiting signs of ADHD, it is imperative to look deeper at the stressors that inhibit nerve system function. Chiropractic adjustments address these stressors with safe, gentle, and specific techniques enhancing your child's nerve system function.

Safe and Effective

One study by the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association published in *The Journal of Science and Healing* examined 14,000 children's visits to chiropractors. No adverse events were reported. Only 3 children experienced slight discomfort after the initial adjustment which resolved quickly in all cases. Almost all participants experienced positive changes in their presenting symptoms and in addition to the alleviation of the child's initial presenting symptoms, other improvements were reported: better sleep patterns, enhanced immune system function and better moods and behaviors. Better overall function and improved quality of life were the side effects of chiropractic care for these children.

The future of family wellness is dependent upon two factors: selective lifestyle habits that decrease our exposure to physical, emotional, and chemical stressors, and informed choices in healthcare that support our normal physiology. Chiropractic family wellness is one vital step enhancing us toward such a future.

—Jeanne Ohm, DC *Pathways Issue #25*

