

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY



HOW DOES CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY WORK?

CranioSacral Therapy works by helping the body's natural healing mechanisms dissipate the negative effects of stress on the central nervous system.

This is accomplished through utilizing a physiological body system called the craniosacral system, which maintains the environment in which the central nervous system functions. It consists of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord, extending from the bones of the skull, face and mouth (which make up the cranium) down to the tailbone area (or sacrum). The role of this system in the development and performance of the brain and spinal cord is so vital that an imbalance or dysfunction in it can cause sensory, motor and/or neurological disabilities.


Like the pulse of the cardiovascular system, the craniosacral system has a rhythm that can be felt throughout the body. Using a touch generally no heavier than the weight of a nickel, skilled practitioners can monitor this rhythm at key body points to pinpoint the source of an obstruction or stress. Once a source has been determined, they can assist the natural movement of the fluid and related soft tissue to help the body self-correct. This simple action is often all it takes to remove a restriction. Other times, CST may be combined with other complementary therapies to help restore the body to its optimum functioning level.

WHAT CONDITIONS CAN CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY HELP?

Because of its influence on the functioning of the central nervous system, CranioSacral Therapy can benefit the body in a number of ways — from bolstering overall health and resistance to disease to alleviating a wide range of specific medical conditions.


Among CST's largest patient groups are those suffering chronic symptoms that haven't been aided by other approaches. In particular, CST is beneficial to those with head, neck or back injuries resulting from an accident — be it from a car, sports or work mishap, or from a fall. The extremely light touch involved in the application of CST makes it a safe approach as well for children, infants and newborns with early traumas, including birth trauma. They especially can benefit from the timely identification and release of restrictions in the craniosacral system, thereby preventing future difficulties, such as learning disabilities or hyperactivity.

Another area of principal effectiveness is with stress-related dysfunctions. Insomnia, fatigue, headaches, poor digestion, anxiety and temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction are just a few examples. CranioSacral Therapy works to reverse the debilitating effects of stress by providing the conditions in which the nervous system can rest and rejuvenate. In fact, it's this capacity to reduce



stress that's leading an increasing number of people to include CST as part of their wellness routines. Other conditions for which CranioSacral Therapy has shown to be effective are various sensory disorders. Among these are eye-moto coordination problems, autism, dyslexia, loss of taste or smell, tinnitus, vertigo and neuralgias such as sciatica and tic douloureux.

IS THERE ANY CONDITION FOR WHICH CST SHOULDN'T BE USED?




There are certain situations where application of CST would not be recommended. These include conditions where a variation and/or slight increase in intracranial pressure would cause instability. Acute aneurysm, cerebral hemorrhage or other preexisting severe bleeding disorders are examples of conditions that could be affected by small intracranial pressure changes.

HOW MANY CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY SESSIONS WILL I NEED?

Response to CST varies from individual to individual and condition to condition. Your response is uniquely your own and can't be compared to anyone else's — even those cases that may appear to be similar to your own. The number of sessions needed varies widely — from just one up to three or more a week over the course of several weeks.


WHEN WAS CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY DEVELOPED?



It was in 1970, during a neck surgery in which he was assisting, that osteopathic physician John E. Upledger first observed the rhythmic movement of what would soon be identified as the craniosacral system. None of his colleagues nor any of the medical texts at the time could explain this discovery, however.

His curiosity piqued, Dr. Upledger began searching for the answer. He started with the research of Dr. William Sutherland, the father of cranial osteopathy. For some 20 years beginning in the early 1900s, Sutherland had explored the concept that the bones of the skull were structured to allow for movement. For decades after, this theory remained at odds with the beliefs of the scientific and medical communities. Dr. Upledger believed, however, that if Sutherland's theory of cranial movement was in fact true, this would help explain, and make feasible, the existence of the rhythm he had encountered in surgery.

It was at this point that Dr. Upledger set out to scientifically confirm the existence of cranial bone motion. From 1975 to 1983 he served as clinical researcher and Professor of Biomechanics at Michigan State University, where he supervised a team of anatomists, physiologists, biophysicists and bio-engineers in research and testing. The results not only confirmed Sutherland's theory, but led to clarification of the mechanisms behind this motion — the craniosacral system. Dr. Upledger's continued work in the field ultimately resulted in his development of CranioSacral Therapy.



WHAT IS THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE?

The Upledger Institute is a health resource center located in Palm Beach Gardens Florida, that's recognized world-wide for its groundbreaking continuing-education programs, clinical research and therapeutic services.

The Institute was founded in 1985 by Dr. Upledger to educate the public and healthcare practitioners about the benefits of CranioSacral Therapy. It conducts hundreds of workshops throughout the world each year, educating healthcare practitioners of many diverse disciplines in CST. To date, more than 38,000 have been trained. Among them are osteopaths, medical doctors, doctors of chiropractic, doctors of Oriental medicine, naturopathic physicians, psychiatric specialists, psychologists, dentists, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, acupuncturists, massage therapists and other professional bodyworkers

Also located in Palm Beach Gardens is The Upledger Institute, Inc., HealthPlex Clinical Services. This innovative clinic offers both private sessions and unique intensive-therapy programs that address such conditions as migraine headaches, traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries, chronic neck and back pain, emotional difficulties, motor-coordination impairments, stress and tension-related problems, central nervous system disorders, temporomandibular joint dysfunction, orthopedic problems, chronic fatigue, scoliosis, neurovascular or immune disorders, infantile disorders, colic, post-traumatic stress disorder, autism, post-surgical dysfunction, learning disabilities, fibromyalgia and other connective-tissue disorders. In addition, UI HealthPlex provides infancy-to-preschool evaluations and helpful one-day ShareCare® seminars designed for the general public.

For more information about how CranioSacral Therapy works, we recommend the book Your Inner Physician and You by Dr. Upledger. In it he explains the origin of his discovery along with specific cases and treatment outcomes. The book also includes a question-and-answer section in which Dr. Upledger addresses some of the questions most commonly asked of him.