

Kids First

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Chiropractic Turns Breech Babies

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, chronic ear infections, headaches, colitis, leg cramping, autism, scoliosis and many conditions are often the result of a difficult birth. Not of the mom. I am referring to the stress of delivery on the baby.

Imagine being squeezed through a 10-centimetre opening. Someone grabs your head and pulls on it with 140 pounds of force. Then there are the forceps, the vacuum extraction and the Caesarean section methods. The stress of delivery can have an enormous effect on the function and alignment of a baby's delicate vertebrae, nerves and spinal cord, possibly causing a host of health problems if the nervous system doesn't function normally.

Chiropractic care benefits all aspects of your body's ability to be healthy. This is accomplished by working with the nervous system—the conduit of internal intelligence between your brain and body. Chiropractors work to correct subluxations, the misalignments of the individual spinal bones. When subluxated, these vertebrae put pressure on the spinal cord and the spinal nerves, causing malfunction in parts of the body.

One such malfunction is the tightening of pelvic muscles and ligaments to produce a change in the way the uterus functions. This is called "in-uterine constraint." It's these tense muscles and ligaments and their constraining effect on the uterus that prevent the baby from comfortably assuming the normal vertex (head-down) position.

Dr Larry Webster, founder of the International Chiropractic Pediatric

Association in Georgia, has developed a specific and safe technique to restore the proper pelvic structure and function of pregnant women. It's called the "in-utero constraint technique."

This technique is a specific chiropractic analysis and adjustment for correcting subluxations in the pregnant woman's sacrum (a curved triangular element of the backbone consisting of five fused vertebrae) and pelvis. It relaxes the mother's pelvic muscles and ligaments, providing the physiological environment necessary for normal baby positioning. This is very important for a baby in the last trimester of pregnancy. There is little room for the infant to turn and he can become constrained within the uterus. The head of the baby can be forced onto his shoulder, or the knee can rest upon the face or the spine bend to the side.

Babies who assume these positions can usually free themselves with little difficulty. Prior to delivery, the baby should normally assume the head-down position in readiness for being born. This type of position is easiest for delivery. Often however, the baby will be in the opposite position—head up. This is called a breech position and makes birth more difficult.

In expectant mothers presenting with a baby in a breech position, the in-utero constraint technique has shown a 75 to 95 per cent success rate of turning the baby to the normal vertex position. Most commonly known for its success in turning breech babies, this technique has been referred to by many as the "breech-

turning technique." However, any position of the baby other than vertex may indicate the presence of subluxation and in-utero constraint. It has been strongly recommended by trained doctors that this technique be used throughout pregnancy to detect subluxations and prevent in-utero constraint.

Because this technique has been so successful and totally pain-free, many women across Canada and the USA have been asking their obstetricians, physicians and midwives to refer them to a chiropractor who is certified in its use. For the name of a chiropractor that is trained in the Webster in-utero constraint technique, you can check out the Web site of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association at <AICPA.org> or you are welcome to browse my Web site at <patient-firstchiro.com>.

Because of the effect the chiropractic adjustment has on all body functions, all pregnant women should have their spines checked regularly throughout pregnancy to optimize health for themselves and their developing baby. Chiropractic care from conception and continued after birth for both mother and child into old age has given many families an opportunity for greater health. ■

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