



## CRANIOSACRAL TREATMENT: A Body-Mind Tuneup



The craniosacral system is, simply put, the shock absorber for the central nervous system (CNS - spinal cord and brain). Within the tube which protects the spinal cord and the tissues surrounding the brain flows the precious cerebrospinal fluid, which moves in a gentle wave-like motion, regulating the pressure on our CNS. This fluid motion also creates gentle rocking of the cranial bones and spine. Dr. John Upledger, DO, of Upledger Institute, has researched and developed the craniosacral treatments as they are now taught throughout the world.

The craniosacral therapist assesses this fluid motion throughout the body and notes where it is restricted or compromised, generally due to tightness, scarring or injury to fascia (connective tissue) or jamming of the bones. Any restriction of this vital system puts extra stress on the CNS.

Treatment includes gentle stretching, traction, holding and rocking of the body to stimulate release and rebalancing of the entire system. Intra-oral work (gentle stretching inside the mouth, using a latex glove and one or two fingers) is often used to treat dental or TMJ problems. Clients are usually fully clothed for this treatment unless it is being combined with other treatments such as swedish massage or myofascial release.

As in any deep bodywork, natural body responses referred to as somato-emotional release or unwinding sometimes occur when the body “remembers” a traumatic experience at the cellular level and spontaneously moves into particular positions in order to release the body memory more effectively. The therapist gently guides and supports this process, keeping the client safe at all times. Unlike “reliving” the trauma, this process is more like unlocking “frozen” or stuck energy from a past event and allowing it to be released in a more positive way that leaves the client feeling empowered and energized.

Common experiences during and following craniosacral work include expanded well-being, lightness, tingling, deeper connection with self, inner clarity and a sense of aliveness. Many people also report experiencing vivid imagery or colors, profound relaxation, or a sensation of floating. Temporary feelings of light-headedness, fatigue, mild achiness or emotional release may also sometimes be experienced within a day or two following treatment as the client moves through a brief “healing crisis”. Drinking lots of water, extra rest, and hydrotherapy (bath, hot tub, swim, etc.) all help to resolve any discomfort more quickly as the body flushes out toxins.

Conditions often responding well to craniosacral treatment include:

- ◆ Trauma of any kind: surgery, accident, injury, falls, emotional shock
- ◆ TMJ and dental stress
- ◆ ADHD, dyslexia, learning disabilities
- ◆ Depression, anxiety and emotional dysfunction
- ◆ Chronic headaches, neck and back pain
- ◆ Birth or labor trauma
- ◆ Post traumatic stress disorder, including abuse and sexual assault
- ◆ Auto accidents, whiplash, head and spine injuries
- ◆ Chronic pain, stress or fatigue

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