



Family Wellness First

Adjusting Infants? Certainly!

I have heard that even babies should see a chiropractor to ensure they are aligned, especially after birth. My son is seven weeks old and was born via cesarean. I don't know what you advocate in regards to infant chiropractic care or if you recommend it at all. Please advise.

My husband and I have been seeing infants in my practice since 1981 and all six of our children (even though they had natural home births) were checked immediately after birth.

This is because as doctors of chiropractic who read the literature on birth and have also witnessed numerous births, we can say that the birth process even under normal, natural circumstances can be traumatic to the infant's spine and cranium. This trauma may adversely affect the infant's nerve system function and therefore affect the infant's future health potential.

Most hospital births include unnecessary trauma. The routine procedures of technological birth (anesthesia, maternal positions, a fearful environment) all contribute to increases in complications and often result in invasive, traumatic births. As we are seeing in the US, the startling rise in C-section deliveries is a good indication that these routine procedures are not leading to safer more natural births but rather to the practice of more invasive, unnatural procedures. Infant and maternal mortality rates are rising, not declining. Technology is not necessarily providing safer care. A C-section delivery has as much, if not more, trauma than a vaginal birth. The pull force on the baby's head and neck during the C-section may be considerably greater than a regular vaginal birth because the uterine muscles of the mother are not assisting the delivery process. Most moms who have had a C-section describe a pulling and tugging sensation as the baby was being taken out of the belly. This pulling (which sometimes even lifts the mother from the table) is the amount of force that is pulling on the baby's fragile spine. Pulling, stretching, twisting the baby's spine during delivery



is known to cause nerve system stress. Mechanical devices such as forceps and vacuum contribute excessive stresses to the baby's cranium, spine and nerve system.

Additionally in a C-section, the baby's cranium does not experience the passage through the birth canal where the cranial bones naturally overlap each other in the vaginal birth process. This overlapping, passage through the canal and birthing through the perineum allows the cranial bones to experience a natural cranial bone reset. For infants born C-section, we have found that cranial care right after birth is essential as they have not had the opportunity to experience the natural cranial molding.

I believe all babies should be checked by a qualified chiropractor right after birth, especially C-section babies who may need additional cranial care. Also, for future pregnancies, you may want to get under regular chiropractic care as well—it will help restore normal biomechanical function to your pelvis throughout pregnancy and facilitate a safer, easier birth in the future.

Additional resource: International Cesarean Awareness Network at www.ican-online.org

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Excerpt from: *Adjusting Infants? Certainly!* by Jeanne Ohm, DC. Read more in *Pathways*: www.pathwaystofamilywellness.org

The Importance of Skin-to-Skin Contact

There are now a multitude of studies that show that mothers and babies should be together, skin-to-skin (baby naked, not wrapped in a blanket) immediately after birth, as well as later.

The baby is happier; the baby's temperature, heart, and breathing rates are more stable and normal; and the baby's blood sugar is elevated. In addition, skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth allows the baby to be colonized by the same bacteria as the mother. This, plus breastfeeding, are thought to

be important in the prevention of allergic diseases. When a baby is put into an incubator, his skin and gut are often colonized by bacteria different from his mother's.

To recap, skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth for at least an hour has the following positive effects on babies:

1. more likely to latch on
2. more likely to latch on well
3. more stable and normal skin temperatures
4. more stable and normal heart rates and blood pressures
5. higher blood sugars
6. less likely to cry
7. more likely to breastfeed exclusively longer



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Modified excerpt from: *The Importance of Skin-to-Skin contact* by Jack Newman, MD, FRCPC. Read more in *Pathways*:

www.pathwaystofamilywellness.org

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