

# Exercise your brain and body



# Newsletter

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*Your brain needs to be kept fit, just like your body. To exercise your brain, try doing some of the following things.*

## Involve your senses in a novel context

You can use additional senses to do an ordinary task by blunting the sense normally used. For instance:

- Get dressed for work or take a shower with your eyes closed.
- Eat a meal with your family in silence. Use only visual cues.
- Combine two or more senses in unexpected ways, by listening to a specific piece of music while smelling a particular aroma.

## Engage your attention.

To stand out from the background of everyday activities something has to be unusual, fun, surprising or evoke one of your basic emotions like happiness, love or anger:

- Go camping for the weekend.
- Take your child, spouse or parent to your work for the day.

## Break a routine activity in an unexpected way.

- Take a completely new route to work.
- Shop at a farmer's market instead of a supermarket.
- Completely rearrange your office and desktop.

## Jump rope

Jumping rope is an excellent exercise. It may also prepare the brain for optimal learning. Here's how:

**Raises the heart rate.** Gets more blood to the brain, providing nutrients and oxygen for heightened alertness and mental focus.

Allows **both brain hemispheres** to perform in parallel.

Helps **strengthen spatial awareness** and mental alertness.

**Balance, rhythm and jumping** provide a framework for reading and other academic skills.

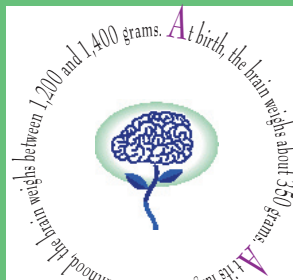
**Physical activity reduces stress.** Cardiovascular exercise places the brain into homeostasis and contributes to balancing the body's chemistry.

**A lifelong activity** requiring little equipment, time and space.

## Clinic details

Family Chiropractic Clinic

## Did you know?



Odd Body 2, Dr. S. Juan

## Inside

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# My Head Hurts



**H**eadache is generally considered an adult problem but it is actually very common in children as well. There are numerous reasons why children suffer from headache and chiropractic may offer natural relief for children, and adults, who live with them.

## Identifying headache

While older children can tell you if their head hurts babies cannot, so it can be difficult to detect if your baby is suffering from headache. Some signs to watch for are pulling their ears, twisting and contorting their bodies, not wanting to look straight ahead and inconsolable crying. While many parents give paracetamol to calm the child this is not the solution to the problem.

# My Head Hurts

cont...

## Why do children get headaches?

There are a number of common reasons why a child may suffer from headache, some of these include sinus or viral infections affecting the ears and respiratory system. Also, children who are in stressful situations where they feel unable to cope may be prone to headaches.

Another common cause which may contribute to a child's headache is allergy and sensitivity to certain food items. In rare instances headache in children can be a symptom of a more serious problem. It is important that if your child suffers from headaches, and has symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, clumsiness, changed personality or over tiredness you should seek medical advice to determine the cause.

## Subluxation

While many things can trigger headaches by far the most common cause is a functional, mechanical spinal issue. A condition chiropractors refer to as subluxation.

The vertebral, or spinal subluxation involves abnormal changes in the function of a joint. A subluxation results in the nervous system not functioning as well as it should. For example, the muscles of the neck are controlled by nerves that come from the spine, which are in turn controlled by the brain.

A joint problem in the neck or skull may irritate the nerves that directly supply these muscles and lead to tightness and discomfort. As the child runs around and plays all day, these muscles become fatigued and headache may result. This spinal/muscular type of headache is commonly referred to as stress headache.

When spinal joints are not functioning properly and muscles are tighter than they should be, there may also be a small change in other functions such as blood flow to the brain. This may result in severe headache, a condition referred to as migraine. In school age children, migraine may sometimes present as abdominal pain and nausea, but no headache. Children with abdominal migraine become very inactive and want to sit around and be quiet.

## Treatment

A chiropractor is specifically trained to find and correct vertebral subluxations that cause nerve interference.

If your child has a headache, your chiropractor will take a detailed history, do a thorough examination and may have an x-ray taken. In cases where the subluxation is the cause of the headache, your chiropractor is well trained to apply very safe and gentle techniques to correct it. Your chiropractor may also help you identify any factors such as food sensitivity or allergy which may be contributing to your child's headaches.

...Headache relief given by a chiropractor is painless, quick and usually permanent.

# Confidence or Brains?

It seems that "brains" may not matter as much as confidence in scholastic success.

Research by Dr. Marianne Miserandino indicates that belief in your ability matters more than natural ability or potential.

In a study of 77 eight and nine year old children, it was found that "those children who were certain of their abilities reported feeling more curious and participated in, enjoyed and persisted more at school tasks".

However, "those children that were uncertain of their ability and motivated by external reasons lost interest in school, did not partake in as many activities, felt angry, anxious and bored, and suffered a decline in their academic performance".

M. Miserandino, "The power of positive thinking, *Your Health*, 3 September 1996, p. 18

The information in this newsletter does not replace informed chiropractic advice or care. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat any health problems without consulting your chiropractor.

## From the Editor

Each week I help out in my 7 year old's class room, listening to children read. I really enjoy this time, interacting with the kids and seeing their amazing ability to learn so many new concepts.

As well as helping out I also pick up tips on how to encourage my own children.

Recently in the class room I was reminded about how important it is for children who are learning to 'take a risk', without fear of the consequences if they get it wrong. In my daughters grade children are encouraged to 'give it a go' and are not made to feel bad if things don't work out. It is fantastic to see how enthusiastically the children respond.

I am now making a conscious effort at home to encourage my kids (and myself) to give new things a go, and to also provide a supportive and encouraging environment when they do - regardless of whether it works or not.

As a parent it's not just my children who are learning - so am I.

*Best of Health*

*The Editor*