

## **Effect of Visceral Osteopathy on the gastrointestinal abnormalities in children with autistic disorders.**

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Autism is a Pervasive Developmental Disorder; impairment of social relationship, impairment of social communication and social imagination without other disability. Most of the children with autistic disorders suffer from gastrointestinal disorders, such as diarrhea/constipation, bloating and abdominal pain. Recent studies reported that the majority of the children with autistic disorders had gradual improvement in those gastrointestinal symptoms and in social and behavioral skills after repeated injections of a gastrointestinal peptide hormone, called secretin. (2,5,6).

Secretin is produced by S-cells in the duodenum and jejunum and absorbed at the terminal ileum. The primary action of this hormone is to increase the volume and the bicarbonate content of secreted pancreatic juice and inhibit gastric emptying. (3,4)

Our study utilized abdominal-visceral osteopathic techniques on thirteen children aged 3 1/2 to 8 with autistic disorders to investigate the possible effects. All of the children in the study were suffering from these gastrointestinal disorders, and also presented with the impaired social relationship and social communication, but were otherwise healthy.

Each subject was given five treatment sessions, one a week for five weeks. Each session was limited to thirty minutes. Two special schools for autistic children were randomly selected for participation in this study. The children's parents and teachers, completed the "Before Treatment" and "After Treatment" Questionnaire which were collected a week after the fifth treatment. The treatments were directed towards the duodenum, ileo-caecal valve, sigmoid and pancreas areas.

Statistical analysis of the results, using "t-test" showed significant improvement in the gastrointestinal symptoms of bloating, diarrhea, constipation, abdominal pain, and also in social communication, such as in the aspect of "lack of awareness of social rules, poor comprehension of verbal instructions and cannot make friends".

This pilot study has its limitations, but encourages more substantive research on this subject.

### References

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