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## Is it Colic?

Dated: 15 March, 2011

I'll often have mothers say to me, "My baby just doesn't want to feed, he seems to be in pain and I don't know what I can do to help him!" It is heartbreaking to see and hear little babies and mothers distressed like this.

For other mothers, colic is not always so obvious. Newborn babies often cry during the early hours of the evening, sometimes because they are in pain and other times because they are simply exhausted and over-stimulated. As a new parent it is extremely hard to read our newborn baby's cues. In fact, until the little people in our lives are able to verbalise their needs, we as parents often have to rely on our instincts and our intuition.

### So what is colic?

Typically colic presents as a constantly irritable baby who cries or fusses for more than three hours a day with no clear pattern except that crying is worse during the early evening hours. Some doctors classify colic as the need to cry for more than three hours a day, more than three days a week. The distinction is subtle, as most newborns cry for about two and a half hours a day. However, a colicky baby looks truly uncomfortable, typically arching their upper body backwards and vigorously pulling their legs up to their stomach when lying on their back.

Colic usually begins during the first two to three weeks following birth and continues up to three months of age, sometimes for longer.

Cont. on back side...

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## Reduction in Scoliosis in a 10-Year-Old Girl Undergoing Chiropractic Care: A Case Report

A case study published in the February 28, 2011, issue of the Journal Pediatric, Maternal and Family Health documented the reduction of scoliosis in a 10-year-old girl. The study starts off by noting that the Scoliosis Research Society defines scoliosis as a lateral curvature of the spine measuring 10 degrees or greater using a method called the Cobb angle.

In this case, a 10-year-old girl was brought to a chiropractor with the main complaint of migraine headaches. Her headaches were described as a pounding pain in the front of her forehead around her right eye. She experienced these headaches 2-3 times per week, occasionally accompanied by dizziness and vomiting. Additionally, the girl suffered with complaints of difficulty straightening her back, shoulder tightness, and ringing in the ears.

The history revealed that at the age of one, the girl had fallen down a set of stairs backward. Years later, the girl was diagnosed at a children's orthopedic center with a 35 degree juvenile idiopathic scoliosis. The medical recommendations at that time were to only monitor the curvature to see if it got worse.

When she was brought to the chiropractor, she had never had any previous chiropractic care. A chiropractic examination was performed which included range of motion, palpation, and x-rays. Several areas of the spine were sensitive to the touch and multiple postural abnormalities were observed. Subluxations were determined to be present and a specific course of chiropractic corrective adjustive care was initiated.

The case study reports that seven months after the initial medical diagnosis of juvenile idiopathic scoliosis, and about six months after beginning chiropractic care, the girl returned to the orthopedist for a new set of x-rays to monitor the progression of the scoliosis. This new examination confirmed that the girl's scoliosis had been reduced by 10 degrees since her last examination.

In subsequent chiropractic examinations, it was reported that the girl was experiencing less frequency in headaches and a 75 percent reduction in the pain. The study also reports that follow-up chiropractic x-rays confirmed the reduction of the curvature first seen on the orthopedist's films. Furthermore, the girl's range of spinal movement began to return to normal and the areas of sensitivity on her spine had disappeared.

Oh, Epsom salt—who knew that such an uninspiring ingredient could inspire such devotion? Epsom salts have amazing health benefits—here are 10 ways to use Epsom salts, including a relaxing bath, a face scrub and a hair volumizer. It's also a miracle cure-all, helping to remove splinters and reduce swelling of sprains and bruises. One ingredient really does fit all!

When magnesium sulfate is absorbed through the skin, such as in a bath, it draws toxins from the body, sedates the nervous system, reduces swelling, relaxes muscles, is a natural emollient, exfoliator, and much more.

**Relaxing and sedative bath:** Soak in warm water and 2 cups of Epsom salt.

**Foot soak:** Soothe aches, remove odors and soften rough skin with a foot soak. Add 1/2 cup of Epsom salt to a large pan of warm water. Soak feet for as long as it feels right. Rinse and dry.

**Soak sprains and bruises:** Epsom salt will reduce the swelling of sprains and bruises. Add 2 cups epsom salt to a warm bath, and soak.

**Splinter remover:** Soak in epsom salt, it will draw out the splinter.

**Homemade skin mask:** Apply the mask to damp skin. For normal to oily skin, mix 1 tablespoon of cognac, 1 egg, 1/4 cup of non-fat dry milk, the juice of 1 lemon, and a half-teaspoon of epsom salt. For normal to dry skin, mix 1/4 cup of grated carrot, 1 1/2 teaspoons of mayonnaise and a half-teaspoon of epsom salt.

**Skin exfoliator:** Massage handfuls of epsom salt over your wet skin, starting with your feet and continuing up towards the face. the warm mixture through your hair and leave on for 20 minutes. Rinse.

Learn More: [www.epsomsaltcouncil.org](http://www.epsomsaltcouncil.org)

Unfortunately colic affects up to a third of newborn babies and it is hard to know who finds colic harder—a parent or a baby.

What causes colic?

There is no single known cause for colic; instead there are many speculated causes including gas, constipation, lactose intolerance, food allergies and structural weakness within the infant's stomach/diaphragm area. Treatment within mainstream medicine often includes drug therapy or simply waiting for your baby to outgrow this condition.

From a chiropractor's perspective, however, many of the resulting symptoms of colic may be due to nerve dysfunction, which results in poor communication between the brain and the digestive organs.

Does my baby have colic?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Does your newborn seem to be grimacing in pain?
- Does he appear uncomfortable when feeding?
- Does your newborn have difficulty breastfeeding, particularly when feeding on one side more than the other?

One simple way chiropractors encourage mothers to assess if their newborn has nerve dysfunction (nerve irritation) is to compare how they feed from side to side, one breast to the other. Often a baby will feed well off one breast but they will not attach properly on the other side. Alternatively, a newborn baby may come off frequently whilst feeding on one particular breast.

Here are some suggestions that may offer your newborn effective relief from colic, so that these first few months may be transformed into a more peaceful, joyous time for your whole family.

IDEAS that help to EASE the PAIN...

- Have your baby assessed by a chiropractor who is confident working with infants. The healthy functioning of your baby's spine and nervous system will play an integral role in the overall health of your child. Chiropractic adjustments for the correction of nerve dysfunction (vertebral subluxations) have long been acknowledged as an excellent therapeutic tool for infantile colic. In fact, chiropractic has been shown to have a 94% success rate with colic. If you intuitively feel that something is not right with your baby, have them assessed by a chiropractic doctor. Healthy babies, free of nerve irritation, are happier babies.
- If you are breastfeeding, seek advice on correct techniques.

If you are breastfeeding, the right advice from a lactation consultant can make a world of difference. Learning to breastfeed can be challenging for both mother and baby and it can be harder again if a newborn has had some form of injury to the jaw or skull from the birth process. Sometimes newborns are unable to suckle properly because they are in pain; they may gulp and swallow unnecessary air in the process.

Chiropractic adjustments in the early stages of neurological imprinting safely and effectively address dysfunction and help restore natural, efficient suckling patterns for infants.

- Allow time to burp your baby.

Newborn babies will take a period of time to learn how to correctly feed, burp and digest their food. It is therefore important in the haste of our day that we allow our newborns any additional time they may need to burp.

To assist burping: sit your baby on your lap, place your hand across their chest and lift them up slightly; this lightens the pressure on their stomach and encourages them to burp. How often should you burp a colicky newborn? When bottle feeding, ideally try to burp them after every ounce of milk. If breastfeeding, attempt to burp them whenever they come off the breast as this is often a sign that they have wind.

- If breastfeeding, cut out all of those 'typically troublesome foods'.

If you're breastfeeding and your newborn is suffering with colic, it is imperative—for a period of time at least—to steer away from foods known to cause irritation. Some of these irritants include drinks such as wine, champagne, fizzy drinks, coffee, tea and other caffeinated drinks. Foods include chocolate, acidic fruits such as oranges and berries, heavily spiced foods, lentils, split peas (such as pea and ham soup), garlic, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and secondary proteins such as beans.

- If breastfeeding, get off the cow's milk! There is a lot of literature which discusses today's high incidence of cow's milk allergies, i.e. milk protein allergies and/or lactose intolerance. In fact statistics indicate that many of us may unknowingly suffer with these low-grade sensitivities. This is a concern for both breastfed and formula-fed babies.

Some breastfeeding mothers find that if they cut out cow's milk and dairy from their diet, their baby's colicky symptoms improve. You could trial this for one week and if your baby's symptoms improve then you most likely have an allergy to the protein or the sugar in milk. Seek further allergy and dietary advice and try to source alternative calcium-rich foods.

- Give your newborn high quality probiotics. Probiotics are extremely important for both breastfed and formula-fed babies. Probiotics are living organisms which strengthen the integrity of the bowel and stimulate the immune system. The anti-inflammatory effects on the bowel is particularly beneficial for colicky babies. Breastfeeding mothers can drop the probiotics into the newborn baby's mouth just before they attach to the nipple. Probiotics can also be added to a bottle of formula just prior to feeding your baby.
- Carrying position and stomach massage for your baby.

By carrying your baby across your forearm with their stomach facing down, you are able to elongate their abdominal area, offering your infant some relief whilst you massage their stomach. To hold your baby like this, extend your forearm across your body and then place your baby face down on top of this forearm with their head close to your elbow and your hand underneath their nappy/groin area. Your baby's legs will fall either side of your hand. In this position you should be able to hold the baby entirely with this arm.

Now with your free hand gently place your fingers on the middle of your newborn's upper tummy area—just under your baby's lowest rib. Very gently start to rub your fingers in a downwards motion towards your baby's belly button.

The intention of this massage is to help relax the stomach. It may help to imagine that with your gentle finger movements you are trying to elongate a small tight ball of play dough into a flat pancake shape.

Here is some fascinating chiropractic research on colic that has stood the test of time....

Two major studies on chiropractic and infantile colic have shown how spinal adjustments can have a positive effect on colic.

One study carried out in 19892 was published in the Journal of Manipulative Physiological Therapeutics. In this study, 73 chiropractors adjusted the spines of 316 infants with moderate to severe cases of colic. These babies were averaging 5.2 hours of crying per day. The infants' mothers were given a diary to record the baby's symptoms, intensity and length of colicky crying and the level of comfort or discomfort of the infant. Over a period of two weeks (usually three visits), 94% of the infants treated with spinal adjustments showed a successful rating when compared with the other group of babies. One fourth of these showed improvement after the first adjustment. The other group of babies, who were medicated using Dimethicone drops, improved by 38%.

Again in 19993, researchers compared their new results with this previous trial and the results of the two studies were virtually identical.

Written By: Dr. Jennifer

Read More: [www.welladjustedbabies.com](http://www.welladjustedbabies.com)

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