

Study Shows Chiropractic Care Helps Children With Ear Infections Recover Faster And With Less Recurrence

Middle ear infections (otitis media) account for over 35% of all pediatrician visits in the United States.ⁱ In 1990, over 25 million office visits in the United States were a direct result of ear infections, and it is estimated that there were over 20.6 million antibiotic prescriptions written that year for the condition.ⁱⁱ

Now, new evidence has put the common practice of antibiotic prescription for this condition into question (see articles inside this issue). Because of rampant decline of effectiveness of antibiotics, and the growing risks of stronger, antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria, many parents and physicians are looking for a more natural approach for treatment.

For over 100 years chiropractors have seen excellent clinical results with children experiencing ear infections. Recently, one of the largest studies ever documented in a peer reviewed journal was published. The study was conducted in a private chiropractic office in New Rochelle New York by Dr. Joan Fallon.ⁱⁱⁱ In the study, Dr. Fallon documented the cases of 332 children who presented consecutively with previously diagnosed ear infection. The ages of the children ranged from 27 days to 5 years. The results indicate that there is a strong correlation between the

chiropractic adjustment and the resolution of ear infection.

The children were monitored using common chiropractic protocols for determination of vertebral subluxation; visual inspection of the ear canal and ear drum (tympanic membrane); and mechanical measurement of pressure in the ear canal. Outcomes were measured by normalization of the diagnostic tests, and by number of adjustments given.

The average number of adjustments given for normalization of all the aforementioned parameters was 4.9 per child. The average number of days that it took for the visual exam of the ear to return to normal was 7.65. The average number of days it took for the ear canal pressure test to return to normal was 9.26. The overall percentage of children who had a recurrence of ear infections within 6 months after they initially presented to the chiropractic office was 15.56%. Another study showed that those who were given antibiotics had a 43.5% relapse rate within 1 year.^{iv}

Another interesting observation was that over 30% of the children in the study were referred by a pediatrician or other medical doctor. This indicates that the medical profession is starting to realize that chiropractic is effective for more than back and neck pain.

Growing evidence in the scientific literature supports the

chiropractic position that interference of the nervous system due to misalignment of the spine (subluxation) reduces normal immune system function. Such interference may lead to an increased susceptibility to infection.

Gentle chiropractic adjustments are safe and effective for children from the moment of birth on. If your child or a child you know has difficulty with ear infections, it is apparent from this study that chiropractic is a highly effective, non-drug, non-surgical approach to resolution.

ⁱ Crouteau N, et.al. Trends in medical visits and surgery for otitis media among children. *Am J Dis Child* 1990;144:535-538.

ⁱⁱ Schappert SM. Office visits and surgery for otitis media: United States. From *Viral and Health Statistics of the Centers for Disease Control*. 214:1-18: National Center for Health Statistics 1992.

ⁱⁱⁱ Fallon J. The Role of the Chiropractic Adjustment in the Care and Treatment of 332 Children with Otitis Media. *J Clin Chiro Ped* 1997; 2:167-182.

^{iv} Friese KH; Kruse S; Moeller H; Acute otitis media in children. Comparison between conventional and homeopathic therapy. *IINO* 1996;44(8):462-6