

Osteopathy for Babies and Children.

Many people bring their babies along to see an osteopath or might have osteopathy recommended to them by their midwife or health visitor. Once a diagnosis is reached, treatment can consist of a range of techniques including gentle mobilisations or manipulations of your baby. Babies' anatomy is complex and their physiology is still developing. There are many areas that can be compromised in a baby at birth, such as the jaw, base of skull, diaphragms and abdomen. Osteopathic care can help relieve these.



Although there is no scientific evidence currently available to support claims for helping some common childhood or baby conditions, osteopathy has significant anecdotal support and provides a drugs free treatment approach.

Even young children may have postural problems from spending too long hunched over games consoles or injuries from playing or headbanging. Children's headaches can begin around the age of 7-8 together with growing pains and vulnerability to sprains.



For the teenager the school bags become heavier whilst their posture develops the 'slouch' – especially with the increasing use of laptops.

During these years, many young people take part in a high level of various sports and recreational activities frequently resulting in injuries which if not treated when

young can become a problem later in life. Many older teenagers also start to take on part-time work which introduces them to yet more physical demands on their still growing and changing bodies. These difficult and increasing demands carry the risk of injury and structural stress that if not treated now can lead to more chronic conditions in adulthood.

Osteopathy and pregnancy



Common problems that occur during pregnancy are:

- Generalised low back pain
- SPD (Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction) - pain or discomfort in the joint at the front of the pelvis.
- Sacro-Iliac Joint pain associated with back pain
- Rib and thoracic spinal pain leading to breathlessness and difficulty breathing
- Neck pains and headaches of a mechanical nature.



Some common treatments for musculoskeletal aches and pains, such as drugs, physiotherapy and exercise are not always suitable for pregnant women. Osteopathy offers a safe and effective way of dealing with these common conditions.

Examination and treatment:

Every patient undergoes a unique examination process. This begins with an extensive case history and an obstetric case history to see if she is suitable for treatment in this way. Then, following the physical examination, she may be offered osteopathic treatment to address not only the tissues causing the problems but why she in particular has the problems and why it has shown itself when it does. Then once the pain begins to subside she may be offered maintenance treatment to address the areas of her body and spine that are going to change during the coming months. If attention is paid to facilitate this normal physiological change, then the change can take place with the minimum of stress and discomfort leading to a more natural and easy pregnancy.

She will then usually, be offered a post natal check at six weeks after she has been discharged from the obstetrician or midwife to assess that mechanically, things have returned to normal.

Remember:

- Take particular care when lifting and carrying especially lifting or carrying other children. Do not carry a small child on one hip for any length of time.
- If you stand for any length of time, keep your bottom 'tucked' in to reduce strain on the lower part of your spine and maintain equal weight on both legs. Sit down when dressing to avoid standing on one leg.
- When sitting, adopt a good sitting posture that supports your back, thighs and feet, use a cushion for support and don't sit with your legs crossed.
- When lying on your side, place a pillow under the 'bump' and a pillow between your knees to provide support. When lying on your back, place pillows beneath your knees to keep them bent.
- Keep your knees together when getting in or out of the car, turning in bed and getting in or out of bed.
- Wear good shoes to support and protect your foot arch.

