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# CONSTIPATION & CHIROPRACTIC



## CONSTIPATION FACTS

Constipation is described as bowel movements that are challenging or infrequent, associated with hard stools and a feeling of not completely emptying. In children it is referred to as a delay or challenge to pass a stool for at least a month for infants and two months for an older child.

Constipation is common in children as it accounts for 3% of all visits to the pediatrician, with a slight difference between boys and girls.

Guidelines have been developed to help identify symptoms of constipation. Those guidelines include: Hard or painful bowel movements; Large stool that clog the toilet; Absence of bowel movements for two to three more days than usual; and blood on the outside of the stool.

The most common causes of constipation are behavioral and diet issues. Diet issues have been linked to the lack of enough fiber intake and behavioral issues can be related to stress and potty training. Other causes of constipation may be from a physical disorder, medication use, or environmental toxins.

Amongst the different alternative health care therapies available for children, chiropractic care is the most sought after. It is estimated that up to 30 million visits per year to chiropractors are accounted for by pediatric patients.

According to researchers the nervous system controls and coordinates all functions of the body and structural shifts in the spine can occur that obstruct the nerves and interfere with their function. It is this obstruction, called vertebral subluxations, that chiropractors correct. By removing the structural shifts, chiropractic improves nerve supply and function.

## CASE STUDY

The child reported on in the study was a 3 1/2-year-old female who had chronic constipation. She had never had regular or consistent bowel movements, which was making potty training difficult. She feared the toilet because bowel movements were painful. Her parents were growing very anxious as she could not enroll in preschool without being potty trained. Her pediatrician suggested this behavior was a revolt in response to her twin sister being potty trained with no problem. Medication did not help her.

The chiropractor examined the child and found structural shifts in her neck, upper back, lower back, and sacrum. Tight muscles were noted and pain in the belly. These structural shifts can lead to obstruction of the nerves and it is this obstruction, called vertebral subluxations, that chiropractors correct.

Following chiropractic adjustments, she experienced complete resolution of constipation and experienced a bowel movement daily without pain. She became fully potty trained within 3 weeks, which eased her parents' anxiety about her going to preschool.

The study's author called for additional research to investigate the clinical implications of chiropractic in children with constipation.

Resolution of Chronic Constipation in a Child Undergoing Chiropractic Care: A Case Report Kara Babinski, DC & Joel Alcantara, DC. Journal of Pediatric, Maternal & Family Health, Chiropractic ~ Volume, 2019.