

# How Did CranioSacral

# Therapy Begin?

CranioSacral Therapy dates back to 1970 when osteopathic physician John E. Upledger first witnessed the rhythmic movement of the cranosacral system during a spinal surgery. Yet none of his colleagues nor medical texts could explain the phenomenon.

Two years later, Dr. Upledger attended a short course on cranial osteopathy developed by Dr. William Sutherland. The course focused on the bones of the skull and the fact — surprising at the time — that they weren't fused as doctors had been taught in medical school. Instead, Sutherland's material demonstrated that skull bones continue to move throughout a person's life.

Putting this new information together with the odd pulsing rhythm he'd observed years before, Dr. Upledger theorized that a hydraulic system of sorts was functioning inside the cranosacral system. He then set out to confirm his theories.

In 1975 he joined the Osteopathic College at Michigan State University as a clinical researcher and professor of biomechanics. There he led a team of anatomists, physiologists, biophysicists and bioengineers to test and document the influence of therapy on the cranosacral system. For the first time they were able to explain the function of the cranosacral system, and demonstrate how light-touch therapy could be used to evaluate and treat malfunctions involving the brain and spinal cord.

In 1985, Dr. Upledger went on to establish The Upledger Institute to teach the public and healthcare practitioners about the benefits of CranioSacral Therapy. To date, The Upledger

Institute has trained more than 80,000 healthcare practitioners worldwide in the use of CranioSacral Therapy.

# What is CranioSacral Therapy?

While the validity of the cardiovascular and respiratory rhythms is undisputed today, for eons the very existence of these systems sparked debates in medical communities around the globe.

Now for nearly 30 years, osteopathic physician and researcher John E. Upledger, D.O., O.M.M., has been a proponent of using the rhythm of another body system -the craniosacral system — to enhance body functioning, and help alleviate pain and discomfort.

The craniosacral system consists of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. It extends from the bones of the skull, face and mouth, which make

up the *cranium*, down to the *sacrum*, or tailbone area.

Since this vital system influences the development and performance of the brain and spinal cord, an imbalance or restriction in it could potentially cause any number of sensory, motor or neurological disabilities. These problems could include chronic pain, eye difficulties, scoliosis, motor-coordination impairments, learning disabilities and other health challenges.

CranioSacral Therapy is a gentle method of detection and correction that encourages your own natural healing mechanisms to dissipate these negative effects of stress on your central nervous system. You also benefit from better overall health and resistance to disease.

## What Conditions Does CranioSacral Therapy Address?

- And Many Other Conditions

CranioSacral Therapy strengthens your body's ability to take better care of you. It helps alleviate a range of illness, pain and dysfunction, including:

- Migraines and Headaches
- Chronic Neck and Back Pain
- Motor-Coordination Impairments
- Stress and Tension-Related Problems
- Infantile Disorders
- Traumatic Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries
- Chronic Fatigue
- Scoliosis
- Central Nervous System Disorders
- Emotional Difficulties
- Temporomandibular Joint Syndrome (TMJ)
- Learning Disabilities
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Orthopedic Problems

# How Is CranioSacral Therapy Performed?

CranioSacral Therapy is performed on a person fully clothed. Using a light touch — generally no more than the weight of a nickel — the practitioner monitors the rhythm of the craniosacral system to detect potential restrictions and imbalances. The therapist then uses delicate manual techniques to release those problem areas and relieve undue pressure on the brain and spinal cord.

A CranioSacral Therapy session can last from about 15 minutes to more than an hour, and it can be used alone or in conjunction with other therapeutic procedures.

The result? A central nervous system free of

restrictions. And a body that's able to return to its greatest levels of performance.

*"To me, the practice of CranioSacral Therapy is a miracle. After my accident I felt ungrounded and off center for a very long time, both physically and in mental function, in spite of massage, physical therapy, chiropractic care and psychotherapy for post-traumatic stress. Cranio-Sacral Therapy was the only treatment that got to the core of what was wrong. Until then, no one had acknowledged the physical cause of what I had been experiencing. So, again, thank you for being there."*

- D.J., New York, NY

## Who Can Perform CranioSacral Therapy?

Because of its positive effect on so many body functions, CranioSacral Therapy is practiced today by a wide variety of healthcare professionals. They include osteopathic physicians, allopathic physicians, doctors of chiropractic, doctors of Oriental medicine, naturopathic physicians, nurses, psychiatric specialists, psychologists, dentists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, acupuncturists, massage therapists and other professional bodyworkers