

As children, proper sensory processing must take place in order to learn academically, socially, emotionally and to develop good motor skills. Sensory pathways to the brain are formed and “groomed” when children perform various actions, such as tummy time, and then later master critical developmental milestones; such as rolling or crawling. If these pathways are not cultivated, the child may later struggle with academics, attention, behavior and much more.

CHIROPRACTIC MAKES *sense*

Since the sensory-motor systems are based on a “use-it-or-lose-it” principle, it is essential that sensory pathways continue to be “exercised” as we get older. If we become couch potatoes or technology junkies, those pathways we created in the early years of life lose their strength. Also, if those pathways become disturbed due to various stressors throughout life, our physical and/or mental health can suffer.

THE EIGHT SENSORY SYSTEMS FOR OPTIMAL HEALTH:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Tactile
- Smell
- Taste
- Vestibular
- Proprioceptive
- Introceptive

SENSORY HEALTH

The “CEO” of all the sensory systems is the Vestibular system. The vestibular system controls the rate, timing and interaction of all sensory systems. All of the systems must work together like a beautiful orchestra and are dependent on a healthy vestibular system. The vestibular system function is regulated by mechanisms in the inner ear, the upper neck and the base of the brain (cerebellum). An unhealthy vestibular system can lead to anxiety, mood disorders,

endocrine disorders, and poor immune function. In children, it is often tied to difficulty sitting still, paying attention, dyslexia and/or other learning disorders.

Poor vestibular health can be the result of subtle stressors or strains to the upper neck region due to stressful positions in utero (such as breech), subtle strains at birth, falls, whiplash, sports injuries and even “text neck.”

sense

WHY IS CHIROPRACTIC CARE ESSENTIAL?

The receptors in the cervical spine (neck) have important connections to the vestibular and visual systems as well as several areas of the central nervous system. Dysfunction of the cervical receptors in neck disorders can alter brain

input subsequently changing the integration, timing and tuning of sensorimotor control. (1)

Since the health of the sensory-motor systems is based on proper nervous system function

and proper motor movement and motor control, all of which are regulated by chiropractic adjustments, chiropractic check-ups are key to the development and maintenance of sensory health.

1. Sensorimotor disturbances in neck disorders affecting postural stability, head and eye movement control. Neck Pain and Whiplash Research Unit, Division of Physiotherapy, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Qld 4072, Australia

