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# Are Headaches and Neck Pain Ruining Your Day?

## CranioSacral Therapy May Be Your Soothing, Gentle Answer

by Bob Jensen

**D**o you suffer from frequent tension headaches, migraines or pain in your neck or back? Are you looking for a more holistic approach to easing your aches and pains? CranioSacral Therapy (CST), a gentle method of assessing and making minor changes to your body that enhance the ability of your body to heal itself, may be just what you're looking for.

From the moment we're born we sustain a lifelong series of injuries, minor and major, and a variety of stresses, both physical and emotional. Though we learn to adjust to this onslaught, over time our bodies get tired of all the compensations we've been making and we gradually begin to suffer from aches and pains that seem to have no obvious origin. These pains are often centered in the head, neck, and along the length of the spine.

Conditions may even worsen very quickly. It's not unusual to suffer a herniated disc without having made any drastic moves, perhaps just after bending over to pick up a small object! It might not have been the act of bending over that caused the problem, but the combined effects of many years of restrictions and minor shocks to your spine. As another example, a slightly lower arch in one foot can cause that leg to be shorter than the other, an imbalance that forces you to adjust your weight by shifting your hips. The shift of the hips creates another imbalance that you compensate for with your back and then with your shoulders. Shifting your shoulders also affects your neck,

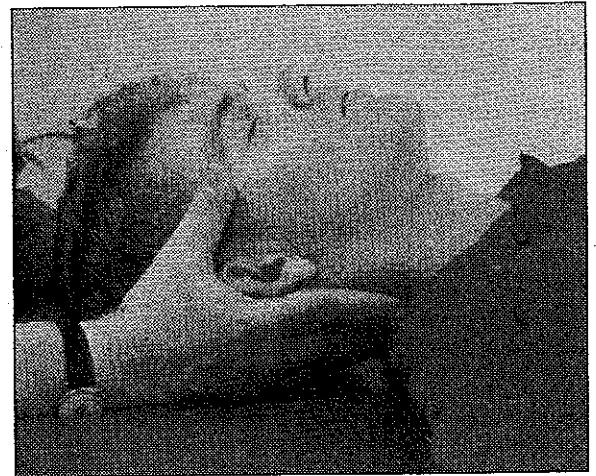


Photo courtesy of The Upledger Institute

causing you to carry your head slightly more to one side. And so it goes.

## Your Eyes Must Be Level, Says Your Brain

All of this shifting and adjusting takes place simply because your brain wants both of your eyes to be level. To make that happen, it puts into effect what is known as "the righting reflex." The compensations required by that reflex may produce a pain in the hip on one side, a pain in the opposite shoulder, and/or a pain in your neck.

CranioSacral Therapy works well to dissipate the stress and injuries that affect your central nervous system as it releases long-held compensations and energy patterns.

When cranial manipulations were first explored by Osteopaths, in the late 1800's, there was quite a bit of debate about whether actual movement of the cranial bones was possible. According to the medical beliefs at that time, the cranial bones were fused and unable to move, and little progress in the study of CranioSacral therapy was possible