

## Why Incorporate CranioSacral Therapy Into an Existing Manual Therapy Practice?

By Tad Wanveer, LMT, CST-D; guest author for John Upledger, DO, OMM

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*Editor's note:* Dr. John Upledger has asked Tad Wanveer, LMT, CST-D, to share his insights in this month's column. Tad has been the guest author for previous "CranioSacrally Speaking" columns.

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CranioSacral Therapy (CST) is a light-touch modality that is remarkable on its own, yet it also is easily and effectively combined with many other forms of therapy. Indeed, tapping into the craniosacral rhythm can add a great deal of insight and precision to any therapeutic process.

Each person's body is unique, and CST can help determine where the individual core issues reside. Feeling the body move in synchrony with the craniosacral rhythm can be used to efficiently locate areas of abnormal motion response. These areas usually require treatment and can be primary to the client's symptoms. With practice, it can take only minutes of light palpation to map the body's restrictive patterns.

### Addressing Fascial Restrictions Decreases Abnormal Tissue Patterns

Fascial restrictions often can be the principal source of structural distortion. If not addressed, they may remain as the pattern around which the body organizes and functions. Fascia forms a continuous weblike structure in the body as it surrounds and interconnects each cell. In so doing, it is the substance through which biomechanical and biochemical exchange occurs.

Whether therapy is focused on bone, muscle, joint, organ vessel or nerve, the fascia will be involved. Incorporating CST techniques, which enhance fascia mobility and balance, has been shown to increase the corrective response within the tissue. These CST techniques can be used effectively before, during or after other therapeutic techniques.

### **Dysfunctional Tissue Can Cause Chaos Within the Body**

Traumatic impact, infection and highly stressful situations are some of the causes of energetically chaotic areas within the body that create turmoil in the tissue and exhaust the body's energy reserves.

The CST technique of arcing is used to locate turbulent areas. Regional tissue release (noticing change in the craniosacral rhythm while following the tissue into positions of release) and the direction of energy technique are used to dispel disordered energy. These techniques can be added into an existing protocol, thus freeing the tissue of the constraints of chaos and depletion.

### **Imbalance and Abnormal Strain of the Central and Autonomic Nervous Systems Often Contribute to Dysfunction**

Disorders such as Parkinson's disease, spinal cord trauma, cerebral palsy and stroke bring to searing light the effects that nervous system dysfunction can create. Less obvious abnormal nervous system strain patterns can be at the center of other issues such as repetitive strain injuries, pain syndromes, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, wryneck and headache.

Central and autonomic nervous system functions are pivotal forces that organize the body's trillions of cells and processes to flow in an integrated, purposeful, balanced and graceful manner. The cells of the central nervous system and the pre-ganglionic cells of the autonomic nervous system are found within the craniosacral system. Thus, adverse strain of the craniosacral system can cause nervous system dysfunction.

There are specific CST techniques used to address the cranial and spinal components of the craniosacral system. These techniques utilize gentle traction to increase the mobility and harmony of the craniosacral system that may lead to the correction of nervous system dysfunction. The techniques can be added into an existing practice either as an adjunct to the existing treatment regimen or as the primary form of treatment.

### **Following the Direction of Ease Is a Key to Self-Correction**

When a practitioner follows the tissue into the direction of ease (the direction the tissue moves most easily), it allows the client's individual healing process to arise. Assisting and following the tissue while using minimal force enables it to move into unique patterns of balanced tension.

Since the practitioner is supporting this balance, the tissue can release itself from adverse strain and reorganize into a more harmonious state. This is a key element of CST and is an approach that can be used in many manual techniques.

### **There Are Times When It Is Necessary for the Tissue to Speak**

There are times when it is necessary for the tissue to express itself. Some examples of this are trembling of the jaw, utterance of sounds, words spoken aloud, rapid breathing, sweating, moving, shaking and tears. This is a natural and often-observed occurrence in most manual therapy.

It can be a powerful and illuminating corrective process when words are used to help release adverse patterns. CST techniques can aid the process in a delicate and empowering manner.

### **Elevating the Client's Ability to Self-Correct**

CST has few contraindications. It can address an enormous range of dysfunctions in a gentle, time-efficient and multifaceted way. Bringing CST techniques into an existing practice can help open the doors more fully into the realm of client self-correction and healing.

[IMAGE]

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