

2008.02

KOCO.com

Oklahomans Look To 'Miracle Therapy' To Relieve Pain, Autism

POSTED: 10:32 am CST November 7, 2007

UPDATED: 1:22 pm CST November 7, 2007

OKLAHOMA CITY -- Oklahomans are finding a way to relieve pain without surgery, a therapy that could also be effective in treating some symptoms of autism.

Craniosacral therapy (CST) is a therapy in which practitioners "apply a subtle movement of the spinal and cranial bones to bring the central nervous system into harmony," according to wikipedia.com.

People who have used it claim that jaw pain, back pain, even migraines have gone away.

Virginia Johnson told Eyewitness News 5 that she uses this hands-on treatment for all kinds of ailments. Libby Johnson said she uses it for her chronic back pain.

"I was in an elevator fall at work ... And, you can tell when the pain starts to dissipate. It's such a relief that it helps you relax even further," Libby Johnson said.

Elizabeth Dickerson's TMJ caused horrible headaches.

"It's made a huge difference. And, it's not some new-age type of medicine. It really is a hands-on (type of treatment). When you get immediate relief from it, there's no denying it," Dickerson said.

Dickerson's dentist referred her to a craniosacral therapist.

"About 85 percent of my patients don't need cranial therapy, but about 15 percent do. Of the 85 percent that don't need it, 50 percent of them would still benefit from it. But, it may be more of a luxury than a necessity," said Dr. Robert Talley, DDS.

However, in addition to treating pain, one Oklahoma mother said this therapy is helping her son with his autism.

"He still has his good days and his bad days, but I think he has more good days now than bad," said Vicki Clem.

Clem's son, Cody, is like every other fifth-grader except that he struggles with autism.

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"He used to be very fearful of thunder and lightning to the point of if he saw gray clouds in the sky, he started to get really upset before there was even any noise," she said.

After working with therapists, such as Brenda Horn, Clem said her son now sleeps in his own room and all the way through the night, even during storms.

Horn said craniosacral therapy relieves pressure on the brain and spinal cord.

"So that the body can work more effectively, and sometimes it works, really quickly. I mean, I've seen results just amazingly quickly. (For) others, it takes much longer," Horn said.

Cody's mom said it took about month for his school teacher to notice the difference.

"She stopped me at school and said, 'You know, Cody's been interacting more with the other kids and was going around the room asking questions and talking to them.' She was just really surprised, and obviously she didn't know," Clem said.

Horn said that while the therapy might not be able to cure Cody's autism, every little bit of improvement helps.

"If you can go from functioning at 50 percent to functioning at 60 percent, you're better. You know, and if you can go from 60 to 70. Every little bit helps you to be more functional in society and in your life," she said.

Cody visits Horn about once every two to three weeks, usually for an hour at a time.

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