

Recurring Ear Infections and CranioSacral Therapy

By: Phil Robison

Personal Information: Sally, Female, Age 9

History: Sally B. developed serious recurrent ear infections beginning at age 3 months, and continuing through age two. She was placed on near-continuous antibiotic regimes. She had her first surgery to install ear tubes (both ears) at age 14 months. By age three she had an additional two surgeries to install ear tubes. By age 9 she had undergone a total of 7 surgeries, all to install ear tubes.

Sally's speech development as a three-year-old was delayed, probably because of hearing loss due to the fluid in the inner ear. She had to be extremely careful with her ears. For example, she was only allowed to swim with special earplugs and could never go underwater.

At the time Sally was brought to me, her physician was recommending another surgery. Both ears had chronic fluid inside and had extensive scarring in and around the eardrum. The proposed surgery would cost approximately \$5000, and additional surgeries for skin grafting would probably be required. The total cost would probably run between \$15,000 to \$25,000.

Sally B. came with impaired hearing in both ears, with the left ear more compromised.

Evaluation & Treatment: I evaluated Sally with arcing and used the 3 vault holds over the cranium. The sacrum - L5 and the occiput-atlas were mildly compressed. The skull was the area that seemed to be calling for attention. The vertical membranes (falx cerebri, falx cerebelli) seemed tight. The temporal bones were making very little movement in response to the craniosacral rhythm. The left temporal was tighter, particularly the left occipitomastoid suture.

Treatment consisted of four weekly sessions, each 45 minutes in length. The first session mobilized the sacrum/L5 and the occiput/atlas with a basic 10-step protocol. The second session focused on the sphenoid and upper palate. The left zygoma and left palatine were initially quite compressed. The third session included intraoral work along the mandible. The right side suprahyoids and right side of the tongue were initially very tight. The fourth session was more whole-body, but spent a good deal of time working with the parietal and temporal bones.

Results: A day or two after the last visit, Sally told her mother that her ears were tickling and felt funny. A visit to her physician revealed that her ears were clear of fluid for the first time without surgical intervention - a big surprise for the doctor! Her hearing was normal. The next follow-up visit again showed clear ears and the old holes/scarring had healed over with healthy tissue. The physician was amazed and called his osteopathic school in New Jersey to discuss this with them. He learned that the school now has CranioSacral Therapy built into the curriculum.

In the 18 months since our last session Sally B. has had no recurrence of fluid buildup. She had two colds during that time but neither one settled into her ears. Routine doctor visits show clear ears. She is able to swim two to three times a week and no longer has to wear earplugs or restrict her underwater activities.

SUMMARY:

Length of Sessions: 45 minutes

Number of Sessions: 4