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Breastfeeding Difficulties and Chiropractic

Chiropractic can have positive results in restoring a comfortable and effective breastfeeding relationship between mother and baby. There are biomechanical connections from the upper neck/spine to the jaw through muscular attachments which can affect jaw tension and therefore gape and latch. Problems with slight tension in the occipital cervical junction at the base of the skull can also result in discomforts when placed into the positions of breastfeeding which entail some extension and rotation most notably.

The specific training I have with a diplomate in pediatric chiropractic allows me to utilize a variety of very gentle, sustained contact techniques to stretch and release the areas of concern with a delicate precision. I have delivered treatments that have been effective in the resolution of breastfeeding difficulties with children from ages 1 day to 11 months old. In most cases improvement is noted within 4-7 visits, with some achieving benefits after only 1 or 2 visits and others requiring a few more.

Most common complaints that bring families to my office for help are:

- Difficulty feeding on one side, or “side preference”
- Increased pressure from latch (i.e.: gripping/biting motion)
- “Pressure line” on mothers nipple
- Uncomfortable/painful feeding for mother
- Breaking latch often
- Choking or gagging often when feeding (signals poor latch seal)
- Increased fussiness during feeding
- Seemingly hungry all the time, like not getting enough during full feeding time

Chiropractic is not mutually exclusive from other health care providers, including lactation consultants and of course pediatricians to rule out any underlying medical condition. It is very common for us to work in conjunction with other health care professionals to achieve the best possible outcome for mother and infant.

Chiropractic care is covered by most insurance plans.

**Dr. Donna Hedgepeth, DC, DACCP has diplomate certification
in the chiropractic treatment of pregnant women and children.**

She graduated Valedictorian of Palmer College of Chiropractic in 2001.