

# REALITY CHECK GEMS

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## What is colic?

When a baby cries inconsolably for more than three hours per day, more than three days per week, for longer than three weeks this is known as ‘infantile colic.’<sup>1</sup> Aside from being stressful, tiring even heart-breaking for parents infant colic can cause both physical and psychological symptoms in parents and can lead to marital tension, social disruption and child abuse.<sup>2</sup> The causes of infantile colic are still unknown and traditional medical intervention is often ineffective.<sup>5</sup> The traditional medical management for colic involves prescribing drugs such as simethicone drops or proton pump inhibitors. However, systematic reviews have consistently shown that these interventions are no more effective than placebo.<sup>4</sup>

## Why try chiropractic?

Colic affects up to 40% of children worldwide.<sup>4,5</sup> Chiropractic is a safe and effective choice for even the smallest members of society.<sup>1,3,7</sup> In one study researchers showed that babies who received chiropractic care cried significantly less than those who did not receive care.<sup>7</sup> Their crying time reduced by about 50%! Parents of infants suffering from colic should consider giving chiropractic a go because it could make a real difference to their baby and their family.



## Crying Babies

It's every parent's nightmare - your beautiful newborn is in obvious distress and you can't figure out how to console your little monkey. The suffocating array of parental advice may be leaving you confused. So what do you do when your baby has colic? In this issue, we have summarised some of the latest research on infants with colic. We hope to bust some myths and put your mind at ease.

**Infantile colic affects up to 40% of infants worldwide.<sup>4,5</sup>**

As many as 40% of all babies suffer from colic.<sup>4,5</sup> A study conducted in the UK looked

at the effectiveness of chiropractic care in affected children.<sup>7</sup> The researchers observed 104 babies who were randomised into three groups. The first group of babies were given chiropractic care and their parents knew they were seeing a chiropractor. The second group also received chiropractic care, but their parents didn't know whether their baby was receiving the care, or the control intervention.





## Listen to the source within

Did you know we all have an inborn intelligence that guides us through our lifetime? When we get a cut, this intelligence recruits all needed cells in the body to facilitate healing, you don't even have to think about it! In your baby, this intelligence is also present. However, due to the somewhat traumatic birthing process and all kinds of environmental influences for this delicate new system, the expression of this intelligence may be compromised to some extent. This could result in odd sleeping patterns, bloating or maybe even colic. Chiropractors use gentle adjustments to the spine to help re-balance the nervous system in order to enhance the body's innate ability to self-heal and self-regulate. So consider taking your loved ones to a chiropractor as early as possible so they can have a great start in life.



And the third group didn't get checked by the chiropractor; instead they received the control intervention. These parents also didn't know whether their baby was receiving care or the control. Parents were asked to complete a 10-day 'crying diary'. The findings from this study suggest that even without chiropractic care crying time reduced. However, babies under chiropractic care cried up to 3 hours less compared to those who did not receive care. Interestingly, the parent's awareness of whether their baby was receiving chiropractic care, or the control did not matter. This confirms previous studies that have also shown babies with colic responding well to chiropractic care.<sup>1</sup> It suggests that the child's improvement is probably due to chiropractic; and not parent bias or parent placebo effect. Further, this study found that excessively crying babies were (at least!) 5 times less likely to cry if they

received care, compared to not receiving care. So it's very likely that chiropractic care really does help at least some babies who are suffering from colic. Remember that the chiropractor isn't directly trying to treat the colic. Instead they're trying to improve spinal function with the aim of improving your child's brain's ability to process what's going on in their body. And for some kids this seems to result in less crying time! This has to be a good thing for the whole family! Other studies investigated the safety of chiropractic care for children and infants<sup>1-3</sup> and

**Crying in babies receiving chiropractic care reduced by around 50%.<sup>7</sup>**

found overwhelming evidence that chiropractic care is a very safe choice for even the youngest members of society. By modifying their adjusting techniques to suit even the most delicate system, chiropractors can provide safe and individual care that benefits the patient in the best way possible. Research published in 2009<sup>1</sup> on the role of chiropractors in caring for children and infants found that only 3 out of 5500 children visiting chiropractic offices reported adverse effects which were described as muscle or spine stiffness or soreness. All cases were self-limiting and the patients continued under care. Parents also reported a host of improvements in their children's pain levels, mood and immune function. A review published in 2011 on the safety of paediatric chiropractic care<sup>3</sup> suggested that about only 1 in every 100 or 200 children who see a chiropractor will experience a mild adverse event, defined as self-limiting irritability or soreness lasting less than a day. No serious effects were noted. So you can trust that your baby is in safe hands and gets the best possible start in life.

**When modern chiropractic care is appropriately applied it is very safe for all members of our society, irrespective of their age.**

1. Alcantara et al. Explore (NY). 2009;5(5):290-295. 2. Todd et al. J Manipulative Physiol Ther. 2011;14(3):97-105. 3. Doyle et al. Clinical Chiropractic. 2011;14(3):97-105. 4. Johnson et al. Am Fam Physician. 2015;92(7): 577-582. 5. Alcantara et al. Explore (NY). 2011;7(3):168-174. 6. Dobson et al. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2012;12. 7. Miller et al. J Manipulative Physiol Ther. 2012; 35(8):600-7 8. Johnson et al. Am Fam Physician. Oct 1 2015;92(7):577-582.