

## Birth trauma: The first subluxation

Trauma at birth, due to use of the lithotomy position, rather than a gravity-assisted position, administration of an epidural that numbs a mother's urge to push, and instrumental deliveries, such as vacuum extraction and forceps, can easily cause a newborn to become subluxated.

These traumatic birthing methods can be the cause of spinal injury (Yashon, 1986; Towbin, 1969; Reid, 1983). Both spinal cord and brainstem injury that may occur, particularly during a traumatic birth, may often escape diagnosis (Towbin, 1969).

We all know how carefully we hold our newborn babies, properly supporting their head and neck. Yet, in the birth process, we often see significant tractional force applied to the baby's head and neck. If this first subluxation is never corrected, the baby's ability to adapt to his new environment, internally and externally is hampered. This baby now becomes more susceptible to any stress or infection that comes his way.

