

Ear infections: Can chiropractic care help?

Ear infections (otitis media) are the most common cause of pediatric visits, and subsequent antibiotic use during the first two years of a child's life. In the U.S., the cost of the medical and surgical treatment of otitis has been estimated to be between three and four billion dollars annually.

Otitis media is a complication of the common cold, sinusitis, or a sore throat, developing once normal resistance to infection has been lost. Just as mental or emotional stress impairs the immune function, physical stress on the central nervous system lowers our resistance to disease.

Use of antibiotic therapy for treatment of otitis media has become quite controversial. Research shows that antibiotic treatment of otitis media is no more effective than a placebo. It also can increase the risk of recurrence (Cantekin, 1994).

It has been shown that the type of antibiotic therapy used does not influence recovery from otitis media, or the length of time for which it was given. Those who received no antibiotics at all had improved rates of recovery (Froom et al., 1990).

It has been found that 93 percent of all episodes of otitis media treated improved with chiropractic care. Seventy-five percent of the cases improved in 10 days or less, and 43 percent with only one or two adjustment (Froehle, 1996).

