

Going Beyond Chiropractic with CranioSacral Therapy

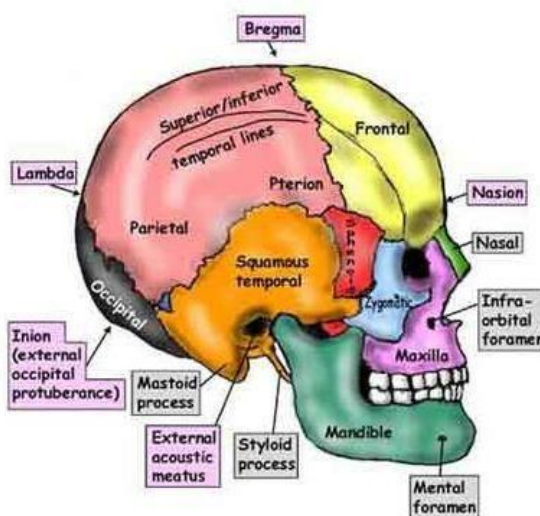
By Dr. Derek Conte

Brightside

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Carol is a 41 year-old doctor of chiropractic who was forced to give up her practice after suffering three head injuries in close succession. The last was a fall on to the side of her head in 2001 while roller-blading at high speed. She had always been an excellent endurance athlete but could no longer compete in the triathlons, marathons or cross-country mountain runs she loved. Now working as a sales rep for an MRI facility, she presented to our office in 2005 with significant complaints: 1) Severe balance and depth perception problems. She couldn't judge the distance of the stairs without looking down, and every time she tilted her head forward or back she'd get very dizzy and risk falling down.

2) Her sense of direction was ruined. She frequently got lost while driving to client meetings and had to have a companion on long hikes. She wasn't able to remember landmarks. 3) She also had difficulty "finding the right words" in conversation. Neither her neurologist nor her chiropractor was able to help.



It seemed that Carol's brain was more involved than her spinal column so in her case, instead of chiropractic adjustments, I chose to implement CranioSacral Therapy, a very gentle technique designed to restore normal movement and alignment to the bones of the cranium (skull) and the sacrum (tailbone) which together act as a pump to move vital cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) around and through the brain and spinal cord. CSF is a highly specialized fluid, filtered from the circulatory system that bathes, nutritifies, protects and is vital to normal brain and spinal cord function. The clinical implications, therefore, are vast.

After the first 30-minute session, Carol was very sick for two days. During the second session she said she "felt a strong urge to cry" but felt "very peaceful" afterwards, not wanting to listen to music on her way home as she usually did in her car. An hour later she felt, "very clear, steady and very energetic". The next day she rode her bike for 22 miles with no balance problems. By the third session she had biked another 35 miles and was able to take her eyes off the road ahead and reach down for her water bottle. By the fourth session she had hiked, unaccompanied, on a complicated trail and did not get lost. "My thinking process was working again", she said. By the sixth session she was training regularly and completed a very technically challenging trail run in 2 hours and 38 minutes - 35 minutes better than her all-time best (before her injuries) when she was in much better condition, attributing the improvement to being "better able to mentally assess and navigate obstacles". By the ninth session, Carol was now "finding the right words" when in conversation. By the twentieth session she could climb or descend the stairs without looking down. She had gotten nearly all of her function back and, boy was she happy!

Dr. Derek Conte is co-founder of Chiropractic Specialists at 1154 Concord Rd. in Smyrna, Ga. For questions Call: 404-784-6008. For more articles, photos, info, go to: drderekconte.com