

# FAILURE TO THRIVE & CHIROPRACTIC

## FAILURE TO THRIVE FACTS

Failure to thrive (FTT) is common in developed countries. 2% to 24% of patients receiving inpatient treatment have indications of symptoms of failure to thrive. Approximately 80% of children presenting with FTT present before the age of 18 months. In the United States, FTT is seen in 5 to 10 percent of children in primary care settings and in 3 to 5 percent of children in hospital settings.

Infants or children who fail to thrive have a height, weight and head circumference that do not match standard growth charts. The person's weight falls lower than the third percentile (as outlined in standard growth charts) or 20 percent below the ideal weight for their height. Growing may have slowed or stopped after a previously established growth curve.

The following are delayed or slow to develop: Physical skills, such as rolling over, sitting, standing, walking and mental and social skills are delayed or slow to develop.

There can be multiple medical causes of failure to thrive including: Chromosome abnormalities, defects in major organ systems endocrine problems, damage to the brain or central nervous system, heart or lung problems, anemia, malabsorption, cerebral palsy, chronic infections, metabolic disorders, complications of pregnancy, low birth weight, emotional deprivation and others. Many times the cause cannot be determined.

Amongst the different alternative health care therapies available for children, chiropractic care is the most sought after. It is estimated that up to 30 million visits per year to chiropractors are accounted for by pediatric patients.

According to researchers the nervous system controls and coordinates all functions of the body and structural shifts in the spine can occur that obstruct the nerves and interfere with their function. It is this obstruction, called vertebral subluxations, that chiropractors correct. By removing the structural shifts, chiropractic improves nerve supply and function.



The infant reported on in the study suffered from severe infantile colic, had breastfeeding difficulties, acid reflux and was diagnosed as failure to thrive (FTT). The infant's mother experienced contractions at 30-weeks of gestation and was medically placed on bed-rest for the rest of her pregnancy. An epidural was used during delivery. At 3-weeks of age, the patient began struggling to eat, pulling away from her mother's breasts and arching her back with inconsolable crying. Consultations with medical doctors resulted in three different prescribed medications with no change in symptoms and infant was hospitalized due to weight lost.

The chiropractor examined the child and found a small baby with decreased muscle tone and a structural shift in her upper neck. These structural shifts can lead to obstruction of the nerves and it is this obstruction, called vertebral subluxations, that chiropractors correct. Following chiropractic adjustments her breastfeeding improved, the child began to reach for toys and play more. She also started rolling over from her stomach to her back, she started babbling, eating more with improvements in fussiness and her acid reflux improved. The patient's pediatrician noted that the patient gained enough weight that she was no longer concerned and canceled a referral to a gastrointestinal specialist. The child is now a typically developing preschooler with no discernable deficits or delays. The researchers called for more research on the chiropractic care of children.

*Resolution of Failure to Thrive, Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), Infantile Colic & Breastfeeding Difficulties Following Chiropractic Care to Reduce Vertebral Subluxation: Case Study & Review of Literature. Ian Shtulman, DC & Joel Alcantara, DC. Journal of Pediatric, Maternal & Family Health, Chiropractic ~ June 7, 2018 ~ Pages 53-56*



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