

*Discover*

# CranioSacral Therapy

*for*

## *Autism Spectrum, ADHD, and Sensory Processing Disorders*



## What is CranioSacral Therapy?

CranioSacral Therapy (CST) is a gentle, hands-on method of treating the membranes and cerebral spinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. This treatment assists the self-corrective nature of the nervous system by freeing up tight structures, thus leading to reduced pain and stress, strengthening immune system recovery, improving information movement through the nerve channels and enhancing health and well-being. Because it's so gentle, CST has proven effective for people of all ages, for all kinds of problems affecting the nervous system.

## How is CST Performed?

A CST session can last a few minutes to over an hour. An intensive treatment series can also be arranged outside of usual and customary appointments. CST can be used alone or integrated with other therapies to enhance well-being. It is performed with the child fully clothed, and seated up on a padded massage table, if possible, or in whatever position is most comfortable for the child. For some children, treatment occurs while they are using sensory integration supports, playing, rocking, or moving about the treatment room. Therapists look to create a soothing therapy environment that is tailored to each child's needs while involving the family or caregiver. The sessions are generally deeply relaxing, and create feelings of warmth and a softening of the tissues that are tight.

## Where Can I Access CST Treatment?

Individual and group Intensive Therapy Programs (ITP) can be designed for any location or client population. Group programs are scheduled at the Upledger Institute Clinic in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, as well as other U.S. and international locations.

Through the Upledger Institute International, parents may attend CST training that is developed for the layperson, so that they may incorporate some CST into their child's home routine. Contact your healthcare professional for details.

## The Role of CranioSacral Therapy in Assisting with Neurodevelopmental Disorders (Autism, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorders)

**CST has been reported in research to help alleviate or diminish the following:**

- Sleep disturbances; shallow breathing
- Irritability, erratic, and repetitive behaviors
- Sensory overload, tantrums, anxiety and fight-flight
- Head banging and other self-abusive mutilation
- Self-stimulation behaviors—toe walking, hand flapping and noise making
- Aggression and intense sensory seeking

**CST has been observed to improve the following functions:**

- Normalize reactions to sensations
- Achieve calmness and focus; readiness to learn and interact
- Feel sensory feedback, so body and hands start doing more things
- Communication abilities (verbal and nonverbal)
- Self cares: toileting, eating meals and dressing
- Quality of life, which also reduces family stress



## The Role of CranioSacral Therapy in Assisting with Neurodevelopmental Disorders (Autism, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorders)

The science behind these conditions suggest some degree of body inflammation. The biological reasons for this inflammation are now coming to light. CST has been shown to treat the consequences of inflammation of the brain and nerves. This helps to soften and loosen tight body parts. CST has also been shown to calm the brain, which can assist with learning and self-control.

### How CST fits into a person's therapy program:

- Helps address the results of the biological reasons that cause autism, attention, and sensory processing difficulties.
- Works within the biomedical approach toward recovery of symptoms.
- Helps reduce seizure activity, promotes detox of the body and assists in healing tissues and organs.
- Works best if there are also efforts to find and stop the source of brain and body inflammation.
- Augments existing multidiscipline therapy programs.

*"CST made a dramatic difference in sensory defensiveness (improved), allowed better sleep, and has been a key therapy in helping my son. It has been a vital and necessary therapy..."*

*– Parent of a child with autism*

*"CranioSacral Therapy has an immediate calming effect on my child. He relaxes and lets go. He will often ask for a session if we have forgotten to make an appointment. Monthly sessions seem to work best now."*

*– Parent of a child with autism*

### In a recent international research study on the benefits of using CST with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD):

- A majority of participants reported measurable changes begin to emerge within 1 to 5 sessions after beginning CST.
- The top three areas of evaluated change in behavior following CST were general behavior, sensory reactions and social.
- Participants also reported improvements in cognitive skills, communication, emotional stability and biological functions.

*"Without CST my son would not have made the progress he has made. He does not have sensory issues to the extreme degree he had when he first began treatment and has significantly decreased his ongoing anxiety."*

*– Parent of a child with autism*

*"My daughter, who doesn't like being touched, not only copes with, but seems to look forward to, going to her CST treatment. It makes her feel better."*

*– Parent of a child with autism*



## How Did CranioSacral Therapy Begin?

CranioSacral Therapy was developed by Dr. John E. Upledger, an osteopathic physician and surgeon featured in TIME magazine as one of America's next wave of innovators. From 1975 to 1983, Dr. Upledger was a professor of biomechanics at the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine. While he was there, he led a team of anatomists, physiologists, biophysicists and bioengineers that performed and published the clinical research, which formed the basis for the modality he named CranioSacral Therapy.



John E. Upledger  
DO, OMM



*"CranioSacral Therapy has been invaluable in treating my child. He is more comfortable, happy, and engaged after treatment. I see the difference if we go too long without a treatment."*

*– Parent of a child with autism*

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The Upledger Institute International is endorsed by  
the International Alliance of Healthcare Educators

If you have any questions, please consult your  
physician or ask your practitioner: