



Discover Chiropractic

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A Touch to Heal

The text came through at 10:41 p.m. on a Friday night. It was from our midwife, Michelle Ruebke, C.P.M.: “I just delivered a baby and think he needs to see one of you guys. He’s too fussy (not crying) and won’t nurse.” Instantly I turned to my wife, who is also a chiropractor, and with little discussion I was out the door. On my 40-minute drive north to Michelle’s rural home, my thoughts were already fixated on this little person, preparing my heart and mind for what was to come.

A baby boy, only hours old, was swaddled tightly and very agitated, struggling to get out a cry. He would not nurse and was having spasms in his arms. Asking questions about his birth and the time since then, I dove right in. His respiration was fast and his head was misshapen, more so than in most newborns. “He only slows his whimper if we place our hands on his head,” Michelle said.

When I checked the newborn I found a right lateral atlas subluxation, as well as a misaligned right mastoid fontanel. The parietal and occipital bones were overlapping each other to the accord of a half inch. With a gentle but purposeful touch, I adjusted the cranials and the atlas. The right lateral atlas set into place with a profound thud. I’ve never experienced a newborn’s atlas moving the way this child’s did. I knew the baby’s innate intelligence was being unleashed to express vitality through his body.

His mother turned to me, maybe reading the joy on my face due to the adjustment, and asked, “Is he going to be OK?” I told her with a warm authority, “You did a wonderful job making him. Michelle did her part in the delivery. Your baby is going to be just fine.” I briefly explained what I found to Michelle and told her we would check him again in a half hour, and for her to nurse him for the first time.

Thirty minutes went by in a flash, and I was checking the newborn again. His breathing was still fast and his cry was still labored. He was not nursing and had not yet let out that classic newborn cry, nearly three hours into life. The listings had returned; right atlas, right ilium, and a left sacrum. The mastoid was holding and returned to near normal along with the rest of the skull, and the inflammation on the vertex was settling down.

Moments into adjusting his atlas for the third time, his breathing slowed and he let out the first solid, rhythmic cry.



Photo Courtesy of Michelle Ruebke

Instantly both Michelle and Rebecca were alerted, noticing that the baby was finally producing the normal cry of a newborn. Soon afterward, the uncontrolled movement in his arms stopped. We all agreed that after the third adjustment he was in good shape and stable. I left, asking them to contact me in the morning. If needed, I told them, I would be back without hesitation.

The next day Michelle sent me this message: “Dr. Stork, he is doing so great that if I didn’t know better, I’d say someone had switched kids on us. No fussing. Nursing like a champ, through the night and all afternoon. He is alert and cuddly. Head is MUCH better—no misshapen parts, caput and bruising are almost gone and it’s no longer sensitive to touch. Can’t thank you enough—he would not be doing this well without your help!!”

On my drive home early Saturday morning, I was humbled by the chiropractic principles and practices that I live for. There was no bag of medicine, no needle full of chemicals, no brain-function monitor that had more intelligence than what was inside that brand-new baby boy. It is good work that we do. With our hands, chiropractors are blessed to free up the body’s innate intelligence to express well-being.

-Ryan Dopps, DC, *Pathways Magazine* #42

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