

CHILDREN'S INJURIES

by Dr. Perry Wolk-Weiss

It's summer and with the long days and warmer weather kids tend to play outside for longer periods of time. Inevitably accidents will happen and injuries will occur. Often times, a parents first reaction to an accident is to rush their child to the emergency room or family pediatrician to assess the extent of the injuries. While these physicians are often expert in assessing and treating life threatening traumatic injuries, they often lack the necessary training to detect subtle traumas on a child's body. These traumas can disrupt the normal mechanics of the musculo-skeletal system thus creating imbalances that might not display symptoms for quite a long time. What natural approaches can you take if your child takes a tumble and there is nothing broken or a life threatening injury?

1. Ice Vs. Heat-There is often confusion as to when to use ice over heat. A good rule of thumb is for acute injuries such as sprains or strains to use ice for the first 24 hours then heat can be used if necessary. Ice helps to reduce the amount of swelling and pain. If you use heat which is better for muscular strains versus injury to joints use only in 15-20 minute increments and moist heat is preferred.

2. Scrapes and Scratches- The blood that comes from a skinned knee after a fall is how the body begins to cleanse the injured area of bacteria. Washing with clean water is the simplest way to help prevent infection. Also, the use of hydrogen peroxide and/or a substance called Tea Tree Oil can be a great natural antibacterial. **Tea tree oil is used externally to treat skin lesions, insect bites, rashes, burns, abscesses, cuts, abrasions, infected wounds, and fungal infections.** Most health food stores should carry Tea Tree Oil.

3. Check Their Head-Certainly if a child bangs their head severely enough you need to rule-out a concussion. However many children will receive an injury to the head and not suffer a concussion but can cause a small distortion in the relationship of the skull bones. This subtle change will not show up on conventional X-ray but can be found by feeling for the movement of these bones during respiration. A Cranial-Sacral practitioner is trained to find and fix these changes in the cranial bones. Not correcting cranial changes can sometimes cause symptoms such as dizziness, difficulty concentrating, headaches and unexplained fevers.

4. Check spine and Pelvis-Falls can often cause vertebrae of the spine to mal-align along with the bones that make up the pelvis. Changes in the relationship of these bones can cause alteration in a child's gait eventually impacting their posture. Detecting changes early on can allow for easier correction of these misalignments which negatively impact the way the nerves carry the messages for the brain to the muscles and organs of the body. Chiropractors specializing in pediatric care are well qualified to safely evaluate your child for these types of injuries.

Hopefully your child will go through the summer having fun and not suffer an injury that needs anything more than a Band-Aid and a kiss on the Boo-Boo to make it all better!