



ASK THE EXPERTS



However vital the use of electronic devices is in children's lives, prolonged hours of use can have a negative impact on their health and behavior. You can reduce the risk with help from the experts.

Children spending a lot of hours on their iPad, computers and smartphones risk neck and back pains. How safe is spinal manipulation for children?

Children are different from adults as they are still in the middle of the growing process. Each chiropractor uses different techniques (spinal manipulation) where minimal stimulation is applied in the case of children.

The application of modern chiropractic pediatric care within the outlined framework is safe. A reasonable caution to the parent/guardian is that one child per 100 to 200 attending, or in terms of patient visits, between one mild adverse events per 1,310 visits to one per 1,812 visits may have a mild adverse event, with irritability or soreness lasting less than 24 hours, resolving without the need for additional care beyond initial chiropractic recommendations.

However in Japan chiropractic practice is not regulated therefore it's very important to find qualified chiropractors (JCR: Japan Chiropractic - registered chiropractors). Most chiropractors see children from elementary school age (5 years old and older) but I personally think that only pediatric chiropractors with specialized training should see children under four years old.

What conditions can chiropractic care treat in children?

The objective of chiropractic care is to improve the brain and nerve function for optimum results. If necessary, chiropractors refer injured children to pediatricians and medical specialists as a part of their responsibility. There is no clear definition of indications but here are some of the common symptoms in children that chiropractors may help from their clinical experience.

- musculoskeletal disorder
- infantile colic
- bedwetting
- behavior problems
- poor posture

From what age can children go for chiropractic?

A newborn baby is very sensitive to external stimulation so that a baby can usually receive chiropractic care from one month old. Not all chiropractors have a speciality in children. Before the consultation, you should

How do you draw the line between a healthy use of electronic devices and addiction?

When persons are using a device to an extent that it impairs their ability to spend time with people important to them or to do important activities. For example to study important things or to do work-related things, or to relate to people without frequently being on the device. When grades or work performance falter or persons around them frequently get aggravated with them for being on a device then it is clearly "unhealthy". If the person is on a device "a lot" but there is no obvious impairment it may not be "unhealthy", but may still be "wasting time" in some sense.

Most parents create house rules regarding the use of electronic devices at home which eventually creates anxiety in children that later leads to bad behavior. What type of behavior should parents be worried about?

First there is the spending too much time on a device leading to impairment in scholastic or social function as noted above. Next is if the child is getting involved with a social network on line that may include receiving or giving cyber-bullying, bad-mouthing, meeting inappropriate people, or lewd activities etc. These problems require individualized investigation, discussion, and intervention.

What specific situations should children be seen by a psychiatrist? Impairment in scholastic or social function, on-line social problems (that may spill-over into the real world), "zoning-in" to being on a device, depression, truancy, and any other concerning mental or behavioral issue.

Dr. Douglas Berger and his staff at the Meguro Counseling Center in the Shibuya-Ebisu area provide mental health care for individuals, couples, and families, in both English and Japanese. www.megurocounseling.com

call up and ask if a chiropractor is treating children in his/her clinic.

What physical conditions in children is chiropractic not able to treat?

- acute trauma with accident not diagnosed by a medical doctor
- shock symptom
- hemorrhagic disease
- cancer
- infectious disease such as influenza

You may not be able to receive chiropractic care with other than listed above.

What advice can you give parents/guardians on how to avoid neck and body pains when using computer and electronic devices?

Using those tools bring not only physical discomfort due to a bad posture but also dysfunction in nervous system from overuse of eyes.

Occasional chiropractic treatments help to prevent physical discomfort and maintain function in nervous system. A chiropractor advises regular stretches and

exercises which are appropriate to each individual.

Some other techniques that you can try are:

- Adjusting chair and desk to a suitable height when using computer.
- Setting up the screen in front of your face and your head should not have a forward carriage.
- Using cushions and pillows on a chair and sofa to keep a good posture.
- Setting a time limit when using those tools.
- Doing regular exercises and stretches.

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