



## Family Wellness First

### Beyond School Scoliosis Screenings

Making decisions regarding the health and well-being of their families is an awesome responsibility for parents. With the magnitude of information available, making these critical decisions might seem confusing or even overwhelming. This may be confounded if there is a limited exposure to family chiropractic care.

The Association of Chiropractic Colleges has stated:

Chiropractic is concerned with the preservation and restoration of health, and focuses particular attention on the subluxation. A subluxation is a complex of functional and/or pathological articular changes that compromise neural integrity and may influence organ system function and general health.

What does this mean in terms of family health and wellbeing? The skull and vertebrae of the spine are bone structures that house and protect the central nervous system. Because of their intimate relationship with the nervous system, chiropractors evaluate these structures to determine if cranial and spinal dysfunction and accompanying nervous dysfunction, which compromise health, are present.

Some parents may assume that their children's spines are fine because they know that the child's school performs spinal evaluations. In fact, parents may not realize that the school screenings seek to identify a very specific type of spinal curvature called idiopathic scoliosis. The condition is considered to be rare in North America. It is understood that these types of programs attempt to identify children who may be candidates for medical orthopedic treatment in the form of spinal braces and surgery.

Parents may also be unaware, that while the screenings are common and even mandated in some areas, the reliability and effectiveness of this practice has met with concern and controversy. In consideration of this, even if a child "passes" such



a screening, they may still have spinal problems that need to be addressed, as these programs do not evaluate for chiropractic subluxations. Only chiropractors are educated and qualified to provide this critical service.

Numerous hours of education in anatomy, neurology, physiology and rigorous licensing examinations provide family chiropractors with the privileged opportunity to interact with a variety of patients of different ages, lifestyles and symptomatic presentations. With children, the experience is profound. We are keenly aware of the deleterious effects of chronic subluxations. We have observed that subluxations depress wellbeing and can be considered as risks for illness and future injury even in patients, such as children, who may not express complaints such as symptoms.<sup>(5)</sup> When armed with information, decisions regarding family health care are not as confusing or overwhelming. A better functioning nerve system and better health are intimately connected. ICPA Doctors of Chiropractic are committed to this connection. Parents can feel confident in their decision to include chiropractic care as an informed health choice

Modified excerpt from: *Beyond School Scoliosis Screenings* by Raelyn Cancel, D.C. Read more in *Pathways* at [pathwaystofamilywellness.org](http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org)

## **To Ensure a Good Night's Sleep for Children**

What you eat and when you eat can affect how you sleep. Some foods and bedtime snacks are likely to help your child sleep and some foods should be avoided:

- Eat foods rich in B vitamins. Sources of B vitamins include whole grains, legumes, organ meats, raw nuts and seeds, mushrooms, deep sea fish, eggs, meat and dark green vegetables.
- Eat foods rich in magnesium. Food sources include nuts, whole grains, sunflower seeds, legumes, whole grains, avocados and raisins.
- Avoid late afternoon or evening caffeine & sugar consumption. Sodas are usually a huge source of both sugar and caffeine.
- Avoid eating dinner any later than three hours before bed if it seems to energize your child. Eating too late at night raises the metabolic rate and energizes some children.

An evening bedtime snack that contains tryptophan can encourage a good night's sleep. Tryptophan is an essential amino acid that the brain converts into the neurotransmitter, serotonin. Serotonin is then converted into

melatonin, which assists in sleep. Many children find a glass of warm milk calming and it is a good source of tryptophan.

### **Other sources of tryptophan include:**

Cottage cheese, yogurt, pineapples, plums, bananas, eggs, turkey, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, cashews and peanuts.

It's best to combine these tryptophan-rich foods with complex carbohydrates like whole grain cereals, bread or potatoes; it helps the brain to absorb the tryptophan.

### **Bedtime snack suggestions:**

Whole grain cereal with milk, oatmeal with milk, peanut butter sandwich with ground sesame seeds, oatmeal cookies with milk.

If your child has a bedtime snack, have it half an hour to an hour before bed.

Modified excerpt from: *Eating Right for Sleep* by Patti Teel. Read more in *Pathways* at [pathwaystofamilywellness.org](http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org)

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