

What is Craniosacral Therapy?

Craniosacral Therapy (CST) was developed in 1971 by Dr. John Upledger, an osteopath who noticed the "craniosacral rhythm" while assisting during a surgery. Since then Dr. Upledger has studied, researched and developed this gentle but powerful technique that is widely used today by thousands of practitioners. According to Dr. Upledger, CST is a "gentle method of detection and correction that encourages your own natural healing mechanisms to dissipate the negative effects of stress on your central nervous system. You also benefit from better overall health and resistance to disease."

The craniosacral system has its own unique rhythm, just like the heart beat or the respiratory system, and it influences most all other systems in the body. Craniosacral therapy enhances the body's natural healing processes and is effective for a wide range of problems associated with pain and dysfunction, including headaches and migraines, neck and back pain, TMJ, fibromyalgia, and any stress and/or tension related problem or disease. The technique is also increasingly being used as a preventive health measure because of its ability to bolster resistance to disease, combat stress, and sustain overall good health.

The craniosacral system consists of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. It extends from the bones of the skull, face and mouth, which make up the cranium, down to the sacrum, or tailbone area. CST is said to work at the meeting place of energy flow and physical structures. It works directly with your body's tissues, but can also have a gentle and positive impact on the energy systems that connect body, mind and emotions. During a treatment, the CST practitioner monitors the rhythm of the craniosacral system to detect potential restrictions and imbalances. The therapist then uses very gentle and non-invasive techniques to release problem areas, relieve undo pressure on the brain and spinal cord, and to facilitate the body's own self-healing and self-regenerating capabilities.

In most instances, the client lies fully clothed, face up on a massage table, while the practitioner works underneath and around the head, spine, and sacrum. The practitioner uses minimal pressure in some areas, while passively balancing and supporting others. The conversation between the therapist and the client's body is one of asking and allowing rather than pushing, forcing or even wanting a particular result.

As a CST practitioner, I believe that your body and your own "inner physician" know best what it needs - that somewhere inside of you is a blueprint of what optimal health means for you as an individual. Instead of focusing on a particular outcome, or attempting to "fix" what is wrong with you, I support your body in remembering the health it already knows deep within it.

Most people find CST to be extremely relaxing, balancing, and invigorating and describe a session as having an effect similar to pushing the "reset" button on your computer. Simply put, CST strengthens your body's ability to take better care of you.