

## Kids and Ear Infections

The cold and flu season is on its way. Are your children prepared to fight the onslaught of viruses and bacteria? Do your children regularly get colds or ear infections? Studies show that by the age of two approximately 66% of children have had at least one episode of a middle ear infection, also known as otitis media (OM). OM is the leading reason for visitation to the pediatrician's office. The traditional medical treatment for OM includes the use of antibiotic therapy and/or surgery to place tubes in the ear, with only limited success in stopping the recurrence of the problem. A recent trend which is even more frightening is the increase in children who have been recommended that they maintain a low dose of antibiotics for months after no signs of OM are present. With this direction, why should it surprise us that we face an epidemic of bacteria resistance, leaving an alarming number of drugs on the market ineffectual when really needed.



It is believed that one of the major causes of OM is a blockage of the Eustachian tube in the ear, which aids in proper drainage. Research has shown that tube blockage occurs when a tiny muscle known as the tensor veli palatini becomes dysfunctional. This muscle is supplied by nerves which can be traced back to the spinal cord in the upper cervical region. Subluxations in this region will interfere with nerve flow to this muscle, which leads to a much greater susceptibility to developing an ear infection.



A common question we are asked is how does a child can get these subluxations. The first source of subluxation is the birth process itself. Although a baby's spine and neck are supple, they are also very vulnerable to subluxation because they have no muscular development to support the spine. A tremendous amount of force goes through a baby's spine during an uncomplicated birth. Other stresses after birth, including crawling, learning to walk, bumps and falls, can compound the problem.

As a chiropractor we will examine your child's spine and locate any areas of subluxation. Using specific pediatric techniques we will remove the subluxations and restore proper nerve flow. If your child is suffering from ear infections we will allow the tensor veli palatini muscle to function properly and promote proper drainage of the Eustachian tube to help promote healing of the current infection as well as prevent future episodes of OM. Another bonus to your child's adjustment will be a boost to their immune system! A key in long term infection prevention and a great way to prepare them for the long winter ahead.