

Help in dealing with Colic

Cranial osteopathy helps babies with colic by gently easing the stresses and strains of birth. These stresses are particularly notable in babies that have had long deliveries, raid deliveries, have been stuck in the birthing canal, have had an instrument delivery and even if they have had a c-section.

Foods that aggravate colic in the breast feeding mother's diet

In tandem to cranial osteopathy it is vital to look at what the baby is consuming in the way of milk as this will obviously have a direct effect on the colic symptoms and the production of excess wind causing discomfort. If the baby is bottle fed then it is likely it is a cow's milk formula which maybe too heavy for the baby's delicate digestive system. There are alternative options that can be used, Christian will advise you on these.

If the baby is breast fed then it very much dependent on the mother's diet and what triggering foods maybe eaten and are finding their way into the breast milk which aggravate the baby's digestive system. Research on foods the mother ate that made the colic worse unfortunately revealed a wide number of culprit foods, including (most often found to aggravate first):

dairy,
wheat,
brassica vegetables - broccoli, sprouts, cabbage,
onions,
spicy foods,
fruits,
chocolate.

Obviously it is not feasible to stop all these foods, but it is definitely recommended to initially reduce dairy and wheat and then start a diet diary of all the foods you eat and drinks in one column and then the severity of your baby's colic in the other. For a sample diet dairy go to the Downloads section of www.christianbates.co.uk. In this way you may be able to track the foods that your baby is most intolerant to. This is assuming that you are eating a reasonably good diet anyway, for example it would not be helpful to the baby or yourself to be drinking fizzy cokes etc, especially "diet" drinks that contain artificial sweeteners, any "junk" foods like these should be excluded anyway.

It is also highly relevant if the mother herself has digestive issues such as irritable bowel syndrome, Crohns etc as these may need to be helped too. Conditions such as these will predispose the mother to malabsorption issues and the food particles that are not correctly digested and are then absorbed can irritate the newborn.

Probiotics

This is often a factor in why probiotics taken by the mother before and during breast feeding are so successful. Not only does the baby receive some of the probiotics through the breast milk but they also strengthen the mothers digestion. The probiotic I use is called Culture and is available from Nutri-Link on 0870 405 4002. It is the most research strain of good bacteria there is plenty of interesting research done on its use, I have listed three below that are most relevant to mother and child, there is more at www.culturelle.com.

Savino et al (2007) found that probiotics improved colicky symptoms in the babies in their study within one week, with no adverse effects being reported.

In addition to probiotics assisting in colic symptoms research has also found benefits in prevention of atopic diseases. Culturelle was given to mothers two weeks prior to the birth and for the first six months of infant life in a double-blind, randomised placebo-controlled trial (Kalliomäki et al., 2001). There was a significant reduction in allergic symptoms in these children compared to controls. The children were chosen from mothers who had at least one first-degree relative (or partner) with atopic eczema, allergic rhinitis, or asthma. The conclusion was that probiotics are a natural source of immunomodulators in the prevention of atopic disease. What's more this same research team performed a four year follow up and found there was still a significant reduction eczema (Kalliomäki et al., 2003).

Kalliomäki, M., Salminen, S., Arvilommi, H., Kero, P., Koskinen, P. & Isolauri, E. (2001) Probiotics in primary prevention of atopic disease: a randomised placebo-controlled trial. *Lancet*, 357, 1076-1079.

Kalliomäki, M., Salminen, S., Poussa, T., Arvilommi, H. & Isolauri, E. (2003) Probiotics and prevention of atopic disease: 4-year follow-up of a randomised placebo-controlled trial. *Lancet*, 361, 1869-1871.

Savino, F., Cresi, F., Pautasso, S., Palumeri, E., Tullio, V., Roana, J., Silvestro, L. & Oggero, R. (2004) Intestinal microflora in breastfed colicky and non-colicky infants. *Acta paediatrica (Oslo, Norway : 1992)*, 93, 825-829.

Feeding Environment

Also the environment that the baby feeds in plays an important part as it is the nervous system that controls the gut. For example the nervous system maybe set "on edge" and therefore create abnormal gut movement which causes colic. This can happen if the baby is fed in a noisy, busy environment, for example under bright lights, with a loud TV on, other children running around etc.. Of course the nervous system may also be on edge after a traumatic birth, instrument birth or c-section. So a simple procedure is to feed the baby in a quieter relaxing room. As for the traumatic birth this will be helped by cranial osteopathy.

Some of these suggestions will be more pertinent to your baby than others, so either put them all in place or experiment with some and then others. In my experience it is better to do all of them initially to get results quickest and gradually introduce foods one at a time for a few days and see which irritate your baby the most.