

Lip Tie and Tongue Tie and CranioSacral Therapy – OH MY!

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So, if you ended up here on my website, you probably have a baby with a lip or tongue tie, have a lip or tongue tie yourself, or know someone who does. Or there is the possibility that you just want to learn about what these ties are and how CranioSacral Therapy can help. Or maybe you are struggling to breast feed and are wondering if ties may be the problem or if CranioSacral is the answer. However you got here, I am glad you are here and I hope I can help you!

I would like to quickly point out that the focus of this is on lip and tongue ties in breast feeding babies. However, CST is helpful for everyone with ties. Second important thing to point out is that I am not a Dentist or an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), I am a Doctor of Physical Therapy and a Certified CranioSacral Therapist. My education is in the body, in evaluating and treating with gentle, hands-on techniques, and, of course, with respect and love.

I love babies and I love breast feeding! I think women's bodies are amazing for producing milk that supports growth and life for their babies! It is remarkable! Breast feeding is not all rainbows and butterflies, but it should not involve bloody nipples, intense pain, a baby who pops on/off, who cannot sustain lip closure, who clicks when feeding, spits up everything he/she eats, who is not transferring milk or gaining weight and who is colicky. As I mentioned, I am not the judge of a "perfect" latch being that I am not an IBCLC; however, a shallow latch with a mama in pain with blanched nipples with the above symptoms going on is not falling into the "things are going well" category.

Take a deep breath here if this is you and your baby. It is OK and you will be both be OK! Your baby may just need some CranioSacral Therapy and, truthfully, so might you! And, you know what, that is better than OK! It is great! There is something that

you can do to help you and your little one!

CranioSacral Therapy is a light touch, gentle, hands-on treatment technique that looks holistically at the body and works to decrease restriction and tension patterns, improves mobility, and function. In a baby with tethered oral tissues – lip and/or tongue ties – there are often restrictions elsewhere throughout the body. The baby may be restricted at the occipital cranial base (where the head meets the neck), may be tight throughout the neck and look like he/she has no neck, may have a recessed chin, difficulty with breathing, may be stiff and tense throughout the body, may have torticollis (tightness greater on one side of the neck), an asymmetrical face, plagiocephaly or flat spots on the head, cranial bone overriding, etc.

CST cannot make ties disappear, but what it can do is help to improve mobility of the tissues by decreasing the restriction and tension patterns throughout the body and alleviate the concerns mentioned above. Through the use of CST, fascial restrictions are released, muscles are lengthened, bony realignment occurs, the baby becomes calmer, less tense, has improved jaw and tongue mobility, and latch and milk transference typically improves. This is where some babies and mamas I work with get to and are doing well and CranioSacral Therapy has helped their baby, their breast feeding relationship, and everyone is happy! Maybe it wasn't even a true tie?! (Oh...faux ties...that is for another day....)

A lot of times a revision may be needed as well. As a CST, I do not stand alone. It is a team effort to help achieve success with breast feeding and ties. When I am asked what I think, I know most mamas want me to say, "no, you don't need to do it," sometimes I think that and sometimes I will say that, but know that most times, the judgement is best done by a Pediatric Dentist who knows the oral structures and revisions differently than I do. The Dentists that I work with who do the revisions are skilled and have good judgement. With that being shared, the decision to revise or not

revise is yours, mama (or dada!) I will provide my opinion on what I feel in my hands and what I see happening and guide you to other professionals when it is appropriate and for additional support.

CranioSacral Therapy plays an important role pre and post revision of lip and tongue ties. CST helps to decrease restrictions and prepare the body for the releasing of the tethered oral tissues. I go over what to expect with the mamas I work with, pain management ideas, and how to perform the stretches. I support the families through the process. Without preparation and proper performance of the after-care by the family, many babies have reattachment of the frenulums and need to be re-revised. Who wants to go through the trauma twice? Post-revision, CST continues to help release restriction and tension patterns, improve structural alignment, improve mobility, improve the baby's latch and milk transference, assists in increasing mobility of the revised frenulums, to release trauma from the procedure, and to calm the central nervous system. CST can restore a bond between a mother and her baby by helping (along with the mamas that are so strong and the other amazing professionals) to facilitate a healthy, enjoyable breast feeding relationship.

One last thing to add, bottle feeding is also negatively impacted by lip and tongue ties! CST can improve the baby's latch on the bottle, decrease the amount of air that is ingested, decrease gas, reflux, and colic.

Whether breast fed, bottle fed, breast milk, or formula, babies oral structures are important. Having lip and tongue ties can impact not just infancy, but can cause lifelong issues, such as open mouth posture with sleeping, retracted jaw, breathing difficulties, sleep apnea, difficulty with food manipulation, speech difficulties, ADD/ADHD, correlation of ties to allergies, neck pain, migraines, etc.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. I would be happy to help!

Here are some fantastic resources with videos and pictures:

http://www.kiddsteeth.com/dental-topics.php?mode=desktop#breastfeeding_health

<http://www.kiddsteeth.com/articles.php>

<http://www.drscottsiegel.com/tongue-lip-tie>

<http://www.drghaheri.com/>

Source: <http://www.connectivitytherapy.com/blog/lip-tie-and-tongue-tie-and-craniosacral-therapy-oh-my>

Dr. Jackie Hines' Blog - Connectivity Therapy and Holistic Health in Red Bank, NJ