

Holistic Options

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I was not surprised about the pediatrician’s erroneous comment that children “out grow” ailments. I was more concerned with the fact that by recommending that the infant discontinue care, she was speaking completely out of her scope of practice on a topic she had not received any formal education on.

Written by Jeanne Ohm, DC

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from the editor JEANNE OHM, DC

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I looked at the mother and responded, "I am disappointed that a doctor would step out of her expertise into the specialty of another with an unfounded recommendation to discontinue care. Pediatricians have no training in the biomechanics of the spine, in spinal deviations and the long term neurological effects this may have on the infant's overall health and well being. A pediatrician has no clinical experience with chiropractic spinal correction and its efficacy in infants. A similar scenario would be if you asked your pediatrician if she thought your child needed dental care. If you did and she responded that she didn't think so, she again would be completely out of her scope of practice by suggesting you avoid care. So, too, her response about the importance of chiropractic care came from ignorance, not clinically based knowledge."

In the above scenario, you can replace the word chiropractic with the word homeopathy, naturopathy, acupuncture or midwifery and the word biomechanics with the word remedies, nutrition, meridians or natural birthing respectively. The fact of the matter is that most pediatricians are becoming aware of holistic care, but remain limited in their knowledge of the care. The comments made about these types of care are often based on personal opinion. As a result, most parents are receiving "professional" advice based on assumptions, not clinical experience or education.

When reading current surveys and papers published by the American Academy of Pediatrics it is clear that a large percent of today's pediatricians are curious about holistic care but do not know where to begin to learn. Although some medical schools are beginning to offer classes on Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), they are simply courses on theory, not practice and are

of course subject to the knowledge and perspective of the instructor.

As parents, here are some suggestions when discussing holistic modes of care with your pediatrician.

1. Ask them what they know about it
2. Ask them how they have come to that conclusion
3. Ask them about their clinical experience with it
4. Ask them if they are interested in learning more

If your conversation is progressing and they are offering you an interested ear, ask them if they would like to meet your practitioner. I know that any doctor listed with the ICRA for example, would be willing to meet with a pediatrician in their community and take the time to explain the importance of chiropractic care in infancy to them. Ask the pediatrician if you could give their contact information to your practitioner so that he or she could follow up with a call or letter.

If your conversation with the pediatrician is not progressing well and there seems to be no interest, or even resistance to your health care choices for your family, it is time to find a new pediatrician. According to numerous studies, many pediatricians are interested in learning and supporting more holistic models of care. Sometimes this may mean going out of your "insurance network" to find them, but you cannot rely on or expect your insurance company to be consistent with the best health care for your family. (Ah yes, this is another whole editorial.)

As for the mother and infant in our practice? The mother also realized that the pediatrician's personal opinion was just that: a personal opinion outside her scope and experience. Her daughter will continue under regular care with us. Next week, I will call this pediatrician's office and invite her to lunch. If we have the opportunity to meet and she is open to a new perspective on helping the infants in her practice—great! I will be supportive of her practice and probably subscribe her to Pathways so she can continue to learn more about the Family Wellness Lifestyle.

Many Blessings,
Jeanne Ohm, DC



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