

Craniosacral therapy

thought to be helpful for newborn babies where they have experienced a difficult birth. Occasionally there are circumstances when there is a pre-existing condition such as an acute aneurysm, cerebral haemorrhage or other disorders involving severe bleeding that would be affected by a variation or slight increase in intra-cranial pressure.

The treatment can be used alongside any medical care you may be receiving – on its own, or with other complementary approaches such as yoga or acupuncture. If you do have any particular concerns regarding your health, consult with your doctor before embarking on a course of craniosacral treatment.

How can craniosacral therapy help dancers?

Amal Alaoui is a craniosacral therapist with three clinics in London, and is communications trustee for the Craniosacral Therapy Association (CSTA). “Craniosacral therapy is a form of whole body treatment that addresses both the physical and the emotional. When I work with a performer who may have issues, say with stress or low confidence, very often the client may not even be aware of the fact they are agitated or nervous. The treatment focuses on alignment and a sense of being centred; feeling connected is especially important for athletes and dancers.

“A craniosacral therapist ‘palpates’ the central



nervous system using a very light, gentle touch. A highly developed sense of palpation is applied to feel subtle movements and imbalances in body tissues and to support the body to release and realign itself. Treatment is gentle and sometimes patients are not always aware that anything is happening. The results can be dramatic, benefiting the health of the entire body, with symptoms ranging from headache to back complaints. It is also suitable during pregnancy and for babies.

“Essentially it is a treatment that works alongside integrated healthcare. If somebody has an operation or experiences an injury, craniosacral therapy can help the body become more balanced. The therapy is especially good for working on the trauma aspect of injury;

it is very supportive and can be part of a person’s overall medical care.”

CONTACT

Craniosacral therapy, as with a number of complementary therapies, is not subject to statutory regulation, although there are professional bodies with voluntary self-regulation. To help patients feel secure in their choice of practitioner, a number of professional associations have been established, taking on the role of self-regulation. In order to register and become accredited by a specific association, the therapist must meet their requirements as well as agreeing to comply with their code of ethics and complaints procedure.

The Craniosacral Therapy Association (CSTA) is the leading accrediting body for craniosacral therapy in the UK and holds a list of practitioners registered with the Association. To ensure a practitioner is sufficiently qualified the CSTA accredits only those

who have fulfilled training and graduated from one of the Association’s accredited colleges, are in continuous professional development and adhere to the CSTA’s Code of Ethics and Standard of Practice. For more information, visit craniosacral.co.uk, email admin@craniosacral.co.uk or telephone 0844 700 2358.

Training courses run by the **Upledger Institute (UK)** are designed as post-graduate classes since most students are already qualified in another discipline including chiropractic, osteopathy, physiotherapy, dentistry, massage therapy, sports massage and Rolfing. The organisation holds a list of therapists qualified through the Institute. For further details, visit upledger.co.uk, email mail@upledger.co.uk or telephone 0800 690 6966. ■

NOTES

1. Irish Association of Craniosacral Therapists
2. “CranioSacral Therapy vs Cranial Osteopathy: Differences Divide” by John Upledger. Published in *Massage Today*, May 29, 2009.

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