

As you Get Older



Osteopathy... as you Get Older

For the relief of:

- Joint pain and stiffness
- Headache
- Neck and back ache
- Congested sinuses
- Heart and lung conditions
- Circulatory conditions
- Knee, hip and ankle arthritic pain
- Fatigue
- Digestive disorders
- Teeth and face problems

FURTHER LEAFLETS AVAILABLE IN THIS SERIES

- INTRODUCTION TO OSTEOPATHY FOR CHILDREN
- OSTEOPATHY AND DENTISTRY
- INTRODUCTION TO CRANIAL OSTEOPATHY
- CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
- OSTEOPATHY DURING PREGNANCY
- OSTEOPATHY AND BACK PAIN

For more information or appointments contact:

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This text is based on clinical observation, and is produced for patient information.

Dentures and plates

Dentures and plates can cause structural problems in the head and neck.

Normally there is a slight movement between bones of the face and head. An upper plate or denture has the effect of holding the bones of the upper jaw rigidly together, preventing or severely limiting the natural movement between them.

Strains may also be set up through the face as a result of dental extractions, ill fitting dentures, old or worn dentures (which cause a loss of height through the face), or from eating unevenly due to loss of teeth.

Symptoms

Face or neck pain, headache, congested sinuses, ear problems or eye strain.

Prevention

Plates and dentures should be removed at night to allow the face to free itself off for some hours during each 24 hour cycle.

How can osteopathic treatment help?

Many of the problems can be successfully treated or helped by osteopathic treatment.

Your osteopath (a title protected by law), will have undertaken lengthy training, and is qualified to recognise and diagnose illnesses and conditions. Osteopaths work closely with General Practitioners wherever possible.

Advice may be given on exercises as well as changes to diet and lifestyle. Osteopathic techniques used to treat strains within the head and body are very gentle.

Advancing years are often associated with the insidious onset of health problems. These problems may be very varied, and include:

- osteoarthritis ('wear-and-tear')
- rheumatoid arthritis
- problems with the heart, lungs or other internal organs
- circulation, especially in the legs
- effects of operations
- effects of falls and other accidents
- problems with teeth and dentures
- general symptoms of declining health

What do osteopaths do?

The body can be likened to a car, in that it needs regular servicing and maintenance as it gets older!

Osteopaths treat the whole person not just conditions, and thus a very wide variety of different problems can be helped.

Osteopathic treatment is aimed at releasing strains and stresses that have often accumulated in the body over many years, thus improving the circulation to all parts of the body. The result is often an improvement in many different aspects of health.

This means that suffering pain, stiffness and poor health are NOT an inevitable part of getting older.

How many treatments are needed?

Sometimes only a few treatments are needed, other people may take benefit from regular treatment, or an occasional 'service' every few months to keep everything working.

Patients are seldom disappointed with the results, and are frequently extremely happy at being able to resume a more active lifestyle.

Common Problems

Accidents, strains and other trauma.

Most people will have suffered trauma at some point in their life, such as from falls, car accidents, or sporting accidents. Often people do not think that they have injured themselves at the time, but to the trained hands of an osteopath the effects of these accidents are often palpable years later as residual strain on the body tissues. This can make the joints more vulnerable to arthritic changes, and cause undue fatigue because more energy is used in simple every day tasks.

Falls are more likely as we get older. With increasing age, the body tissues lose some of their flexibility and elasticity and do not recover as quickly from trauma. This imparts lasting strains in the body, which can not only aggravate existing problems, but also predispose to other illnesses.

Treatment

Osteopathic treatment can be effective at releasing the residual strains from past accidents (recent or long ago). This allows the body to function more efficiently. The result is often an improvement in areas giving pain or other symptoms.

Osteoarthritis

This is the most common symptom of getting older. It can occur in many of the joints in the body, some joints are more vulnerable than others.

Symptoms and signs

- enlargement and persistent swelling of a joint
- aching, pain and stiffness, worse on initially moving a joint after resting
- increased pain and swelling if joint is overused

Arthritis can affect any joint in the body, but the back, hips and knees are some of the most debilitating.

Treatment

Gentle manipulative osteopathic treatment improves circulation around the joint, improves mobility and slows the rate of deterioration in the joint.

If replacement surgery is finally needed, the body tissues are generally in better health and the recovery is swifter. Treatment after surgery also speeds up recovery.

Rheumatoid arthritis with its hot, swollen joints, may also show some improvement with regular osteopathic treatment.

Illnesses – heart and lungs

Heart disease is one of the main causes of disability in the elderly. It is often associated with breathing difficulties and lung problems.

Heart and lung problems may be aggravated by tension in the chest. The chest area is one of the first to tighten up when we are worried or under stress. Tension causes muscles to tighten, and reduces the ability of the chest to expand fully in breathing. This can constrict the heart and lungs, and make them more vulnerable to disease.

Treatment

Gentle osteopathic treatment is used to release tension in the diaphragm and muscles of the chest. This encourages and restores normal breathing movements and helps the heart and lungs to work to their best potential.

Effects of Surgery

Some surgery leaves behind excessive scar tissue, and this can be the cause of problems within the abdomen or pelvis. It is sometimes possible to release some of these effects with osteopathic treatment.