

“VISCERAL AND CRANIAL” OSTEOPATHY IN NEWBORNS: A QUESTIONABLE PRACTICE¹

Press release from the French National Academy of Medicine

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Not reimbursed by the National Health Insurance, osteopathy practices, described as ‘visceral and cranial’ are offered to parents for their newborns, accompanied by numerous health claims, for symptoms as trivial as difficult breastfeeding, night crying, constipation, colic, bloating, snoring, anxiety or ear infections....

However, the arguments used to justify these practices are based on assertions that are not or insufficiently supported by studies that comply with current standards and by objective and scientific assessments of their effectiveness and safety.

These inadequacies contrast with the increasing number of advertisements, including in maternity wards, which results in an increasing offer, made to parents, of these costly practices.

Considering the particularly fragile population of new-born babies, and the attentive susceptibility of parents seduced by non-medical, non-drug alternative practices, the French Academy of Medicine questions itself and:

- calls the attention of the health authorities and health professionals on the application to newborn of these ‘visceral and cranial’ osteopathic practices, which have no proven scientific basis and unproven effectiveness and safety;
- calls for an objective assessment of these practices in view of the claims made;
- wishes, following the recommendations of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs in its 2021 report, that the quality of training in these

¹ Press release from the Academy's Rapid Communication Platform.

practices, provided by osteopathic training establishments approved in 2021, be strengthened and objectively assessed by medical and surgical peri-natal specialists and that monitoring of the adverse effects of osteopathic practices in newborns be implemented to ensure the safety of newborn care;

– denounces advertisements promoting these osteopathic practices for newborns in maternity wards.

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