A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consisting of white and light blue lines that resemble a circuit board or neural pathways, with small circles at various points.

# CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY AND BRAIN INJURY: A PATHWAY TO HEALING

JACQUELYN MASCIANGELO HINES, PT, DPT, MPT, C/NDT, CST-T  
CONNECTIVITY THERAPY AND HOLISTIC HEALTH

# WHAT IS CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY?

- History

- Dr. John Upledger (1932-2012)
  - Osteopath
  - Professor of Biomechanics and Researcher at Michigan State University (1975-1983)
  - Expanded Dr. Sutherland's concepts
  - Believed origins of dysfunction = fascia and dura
  - Upledger Institute Clinic and Upledger Institute International



# cra·ni·o·sa·cral ther·a·py

1: a light-touch, whole-body treatment technique developed by John E. Upledger, DO, OMM; works with the body's craniosacral system to support and nourish the central nervous system – improving overall health and well-being.

2: a complementary method of hands-on bodywork; works with the natural and unique rhythms of the different body systems to pinpoint and address problem sources.

3: helps to alleviate the aches, pains and strains of life; improves coping mechanisms to allow for better management of stress.

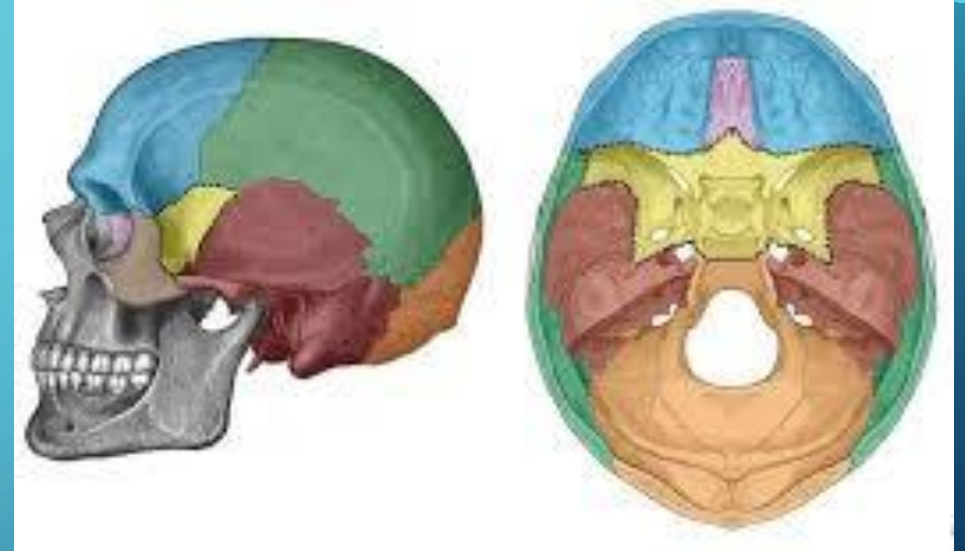
4: improves the body's ability to self-care; can produce profound, positive changes.

 Upledger  
Institute  
*International*  
Upledger.com

CranioSacral Therapy: [Origin:1970s.]  
Coined by John E. Upledger, DO, OMM  
to describe the treatment modality  
that he developed during his research  
at Michigan State University

# WHAT IS CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY?

- CranioSacral System
  - Closed circuit pump
  - CranioSacral Rhythm
  - Cranial sutures/bones



# HOW IS IT DIFFERENT THAN OTHER TREATMENTS?

- Wide range – intrusive to non intrusive, active to passive, firm to no contact
- Grounded, Blend/Meld, Listen/Neutral, Follow
- 5 grams
- Non-invasive
- Inner Physician – empower to assist
- No agenda - “Treat what you feel”



# WHAT DOES A SESSION LOOK LIKE?

- Fully clothed
- Comfortable position
- Children – treat where they need to be
- “Watching paint dry”

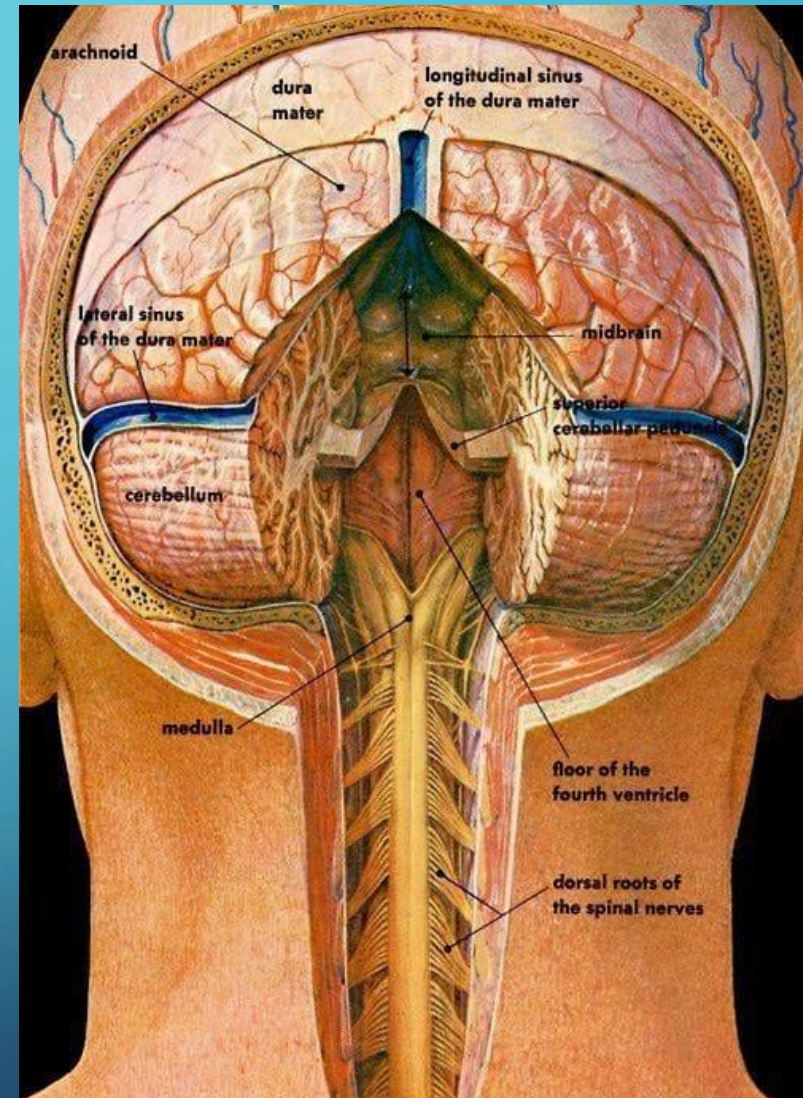


# WHAT CAN CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY HELP?

- EVERYTHING!!
  - Releasing Structural Restrictions
  - SomatoEmotional Release
    - Body/Mind; Physical/Emotional
    - Trauma
  - Rebalancing System
    - CNS and impacts all systems of the body
  - Improving Function

# STRUCTURAL CHANGES

- Bones
- Muscle
- Fascia
- Meningeal layers
- Glial matrix
- Brain structures

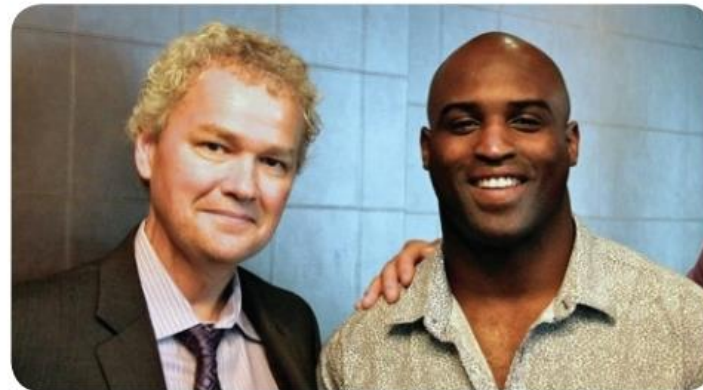




# CONTRAINDICATIONS

- In specific situations where a change in intracranial fluid pressure can be detrimental the patient (intracranial hemorrhage/intracranial aneurysm/recent skull fracture/herniation of the medulla oblongata)
- Seek clearance or an advanced therapist for acute conditions/diagnoses (such as Arnold Chiari Malformation)

# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY



Sponsored by The Upledger Foundation and the Ricky Williams Foundation

# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- The Ricky Williams Concussion Project Sponsored by: The Upledger Foundation and the Ricky Williams Foundation
- Authors: Gail Wetzler, PT, DPT, EDO, BI-D Sally Fryer PT, DPT, CST-D, SIPT Cert. George Visger, BS, Wildlife Biologist, TBI Consultant Retired Professional Football Player for the NFL

# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- **Purpose:** To determine if specific manual therapy techniques would provide an intervention with positive changes to enhance recovery or diminish long-term sequelae for post professional athletes with a history of concussions.
- **Objective:** Many victims of concussion injuries report signs and symptoms years after the incident(s). The object of this study was to demonstrate if the intervention of specific manual therapy techniques aimed at the structures responsible for the body's principal imbalances would make a difference in the long-term sequelae of post concussive symptomatology.

# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- Study Design:

- A pilot study (case series) with 5 post professional male football players that were tested with Gold Standard of tests immediately before, after, 4 weeks and 3 months post treatment.
  - Medical exam (given PCS dx), Impact Test, Beck Depression Inventory II, Numeric Pain Intensity Scale, SF 36 QoL, HIT 6, Dizziness Handicap Inventory, Dynamic Gait Index; ROM, Strength, Vestibular and Balance tests

- Intervention:

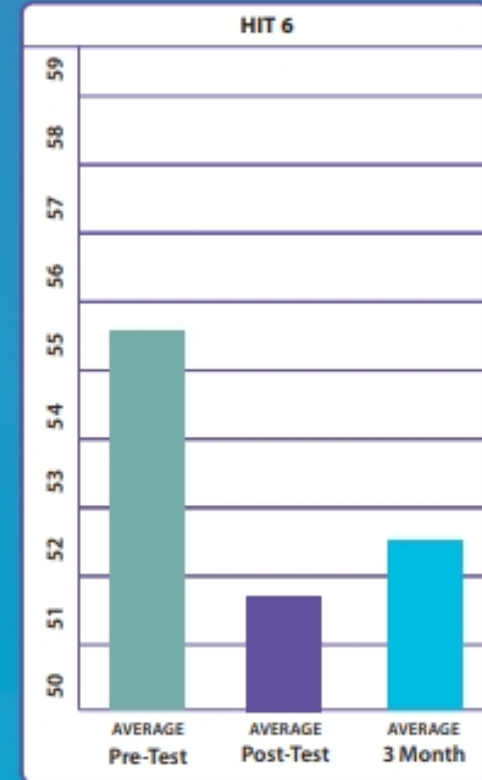
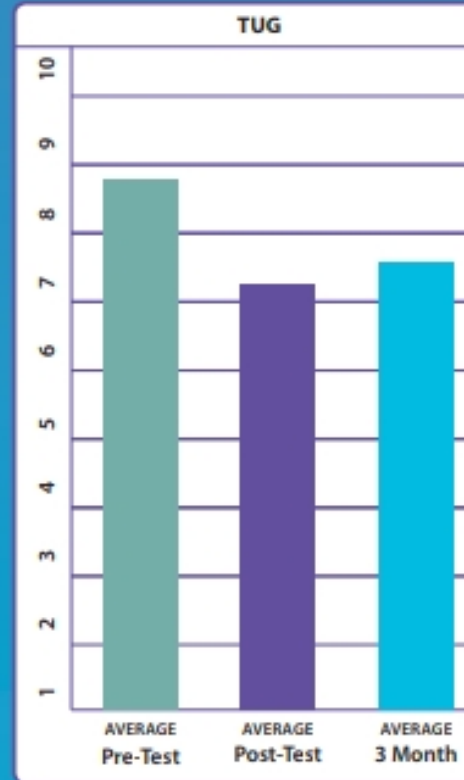
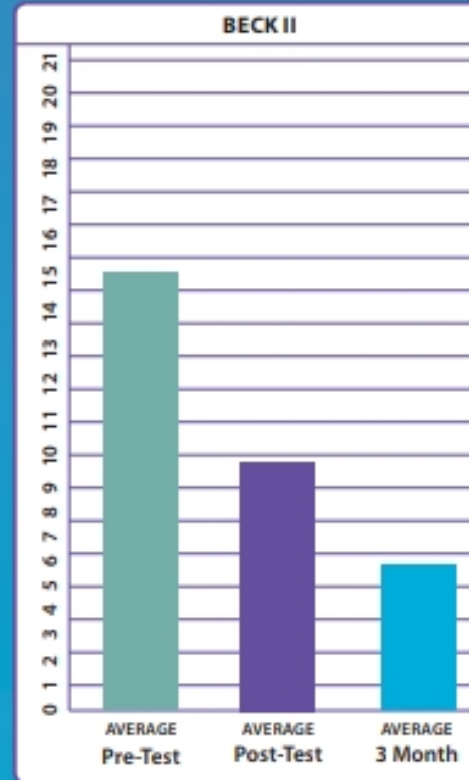
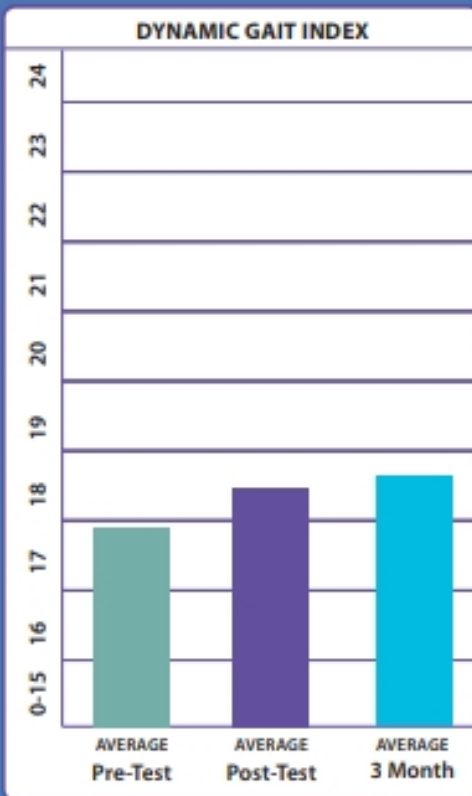
- Consisted of manual therapy techniques given by certified, licensed and experienced therapists at the Upledger Institute from July 14 – 18, 2014.
- Intensive therapy program - each participant received manual techniques: CranioSacral, Visceral and NeuroMeningeal techniques, 2x/day x 5 days



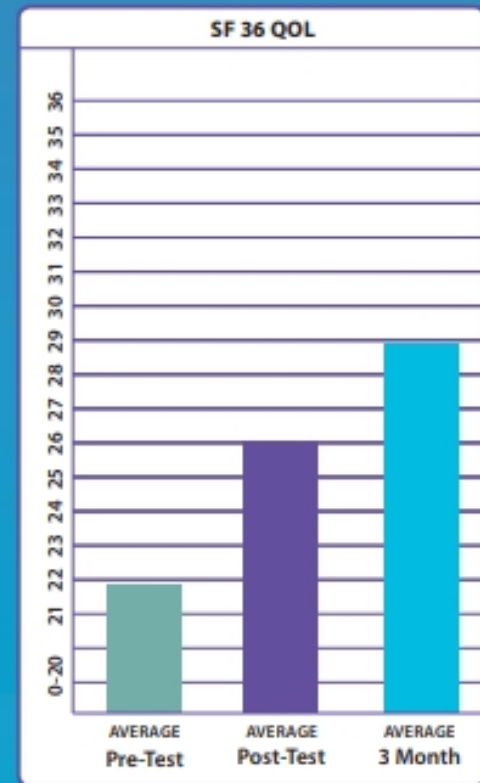
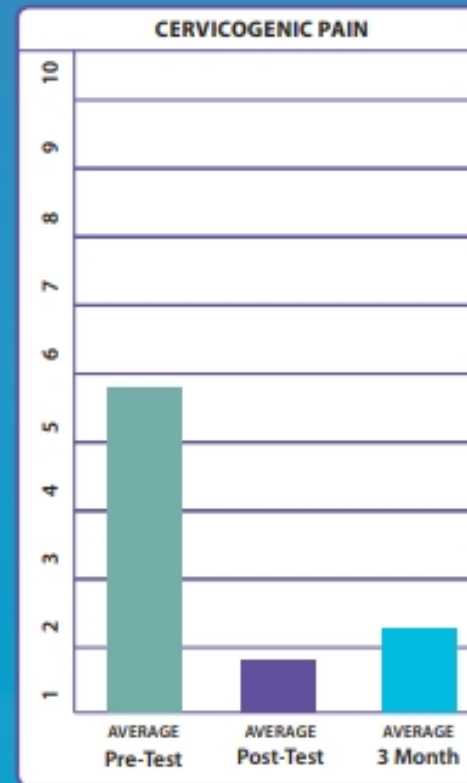
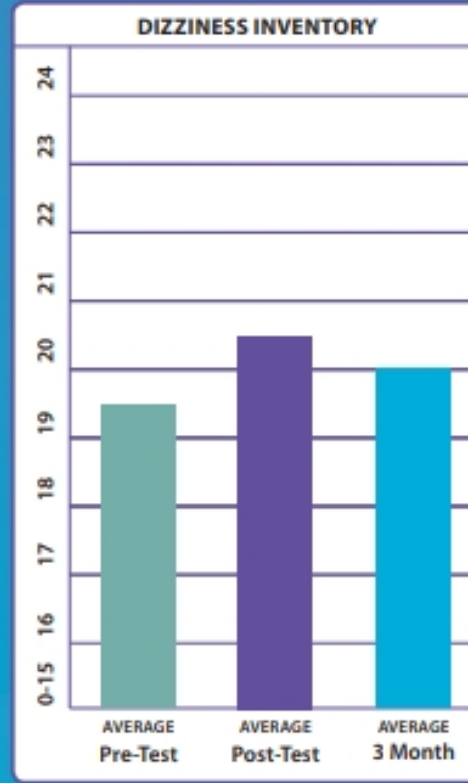
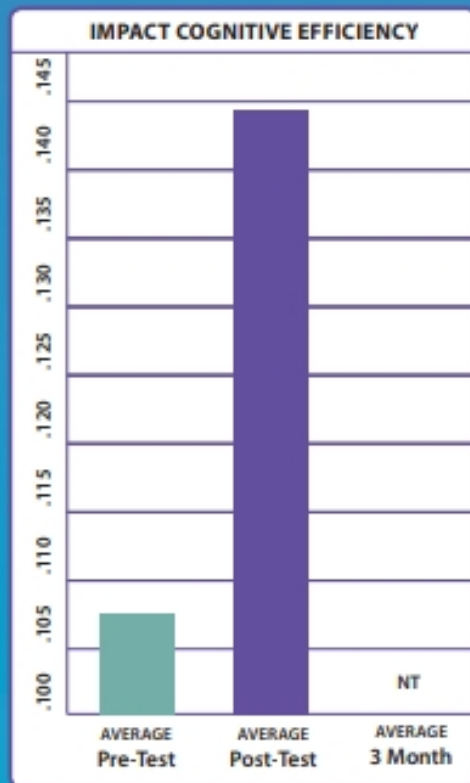
# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- Conclusions:
  - Improvement with less overall pain
  - Increase in Quality of Life
  - Significant difference in depression symptoms
  - Significant difference in decreased cervicogenic pain
  - Increase in Cervical ROM
  - Increase in the average numbers of hours of sleep/night

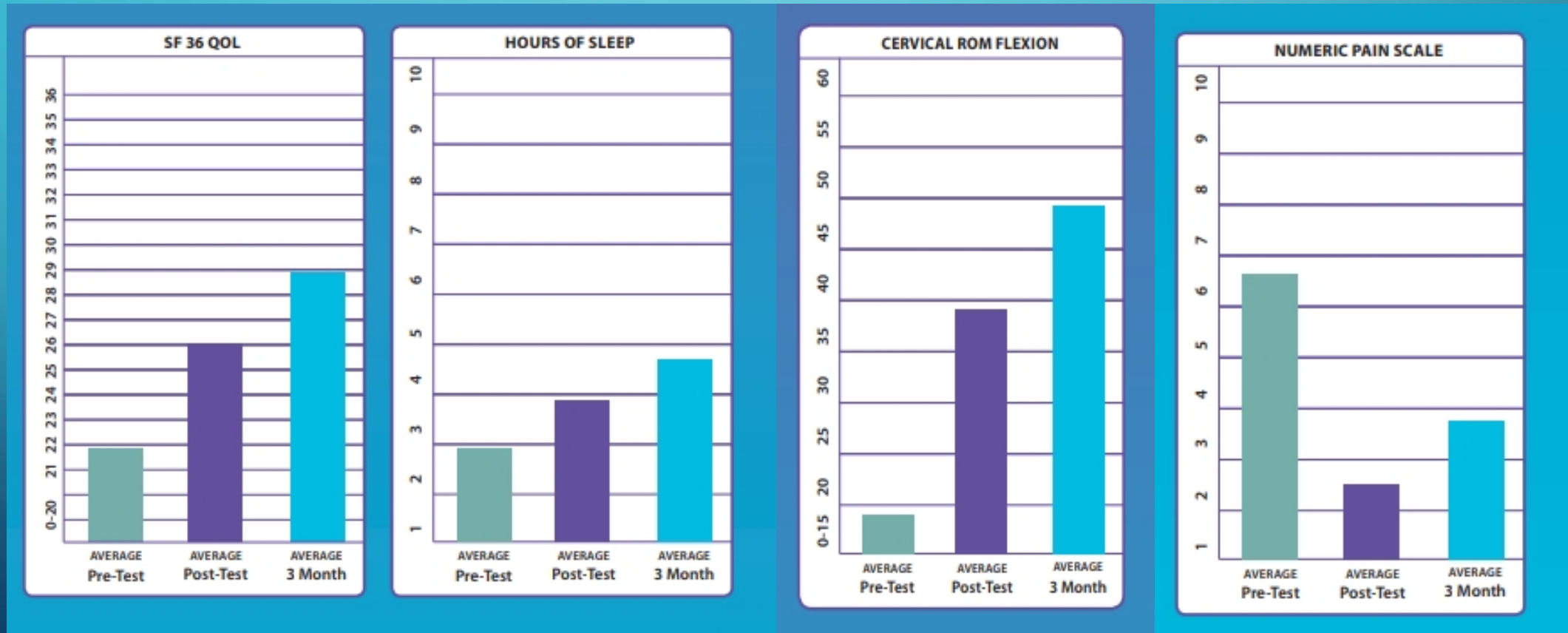
# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY



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# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- Limitations:

- Small population
- No control group

- Future Research:

- Results show significant changes to support the validity of future research
- Larger patient population with control group

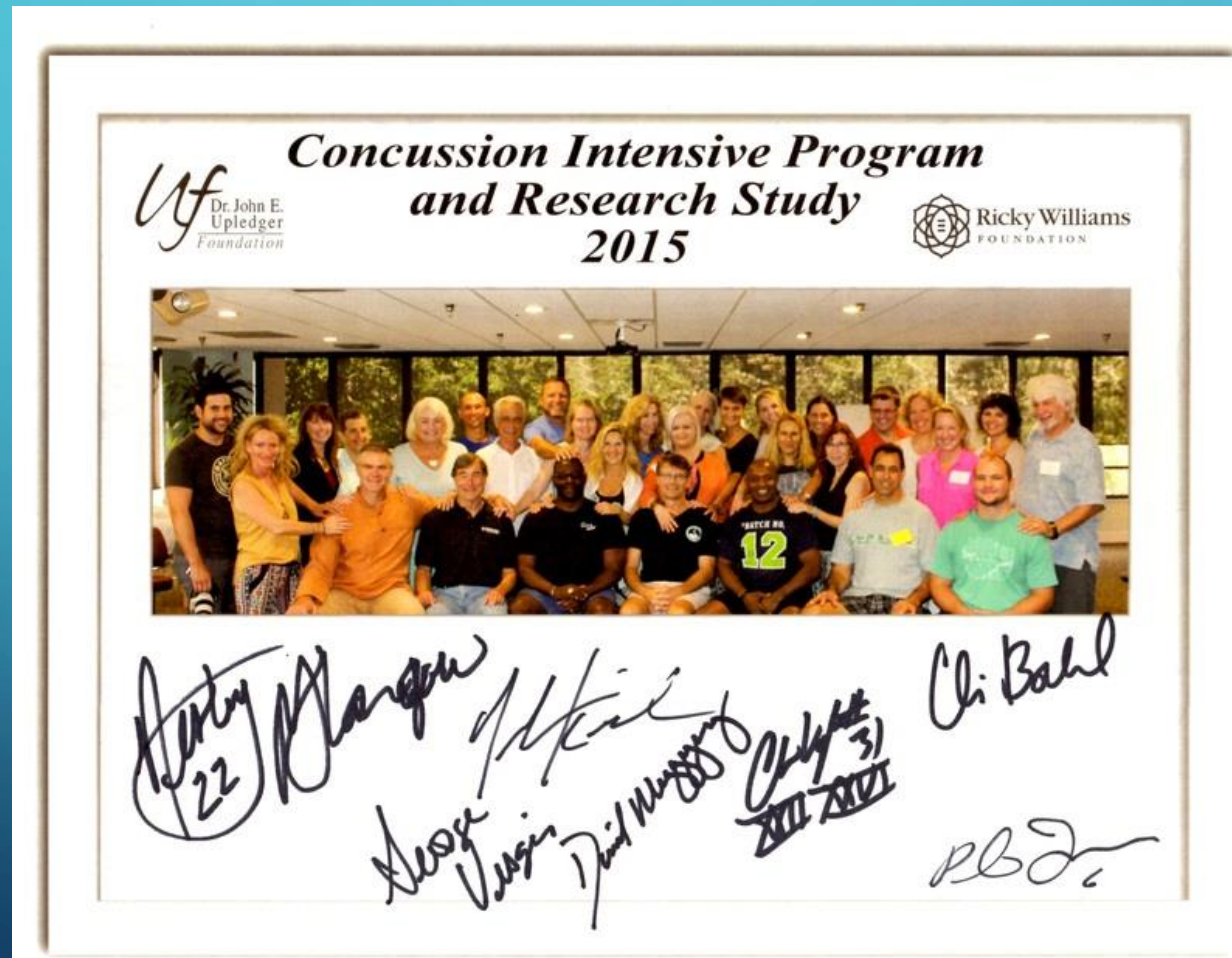




# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

- Follow-up Study – 2015
- Approximately 25 other therapists
- Study on the effects of intensive therapy on Post-Concussion Syndrome with retired NFL and CFL athletes
- Goal:
  - Use of manual therapy approaches, including CranioSacral Therapy, Visceral Manipulation, and Neural Manipulation, to alleviate the symptoms of Post-Concussion Syndrome, of repeated trauma to the brain, and to allow for healing in those individuals with a predisposition for Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy

# THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY



# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Clarence Vaughn

Washington Redskins  
1987 - 1992 :

Going through the Upledger / Ricky Williams CranioSacral Intensive changed my life in a very dramatic and very positive way. I had been suffering from depression and body pain, and to deal with that I had been turning to alcohol in an attempt to find relief. I was trying to be strong and stoic, fitting in like a regular guy. I actually had reservation and resistance to participate in the program, but luckily my wife helped me see the value in going.

During the intensive, the therapists used persistent but gentle hand pressure at various contact points and areas on my body. Sometimes I questioned if anything was actually happening, but at the end of each session I felt noticeably better. By the end of the week I was a new man. The pain in my neck, shoulders and hips was gone! I felt a great sense of freedom, like I had shed old clothes that were too tight and no longer fit. On the last day when we underwent a repeat of the baseline testing I felt like I did noticeably better in all areas, especially in the balance tests.

Now, three weeks later, I'm still pain free. The urge to drink alcohol is gone. I feel younger and more energetic. My friends comment that I seem different in a positive way. I feel like I'm more conscious about my body and state of mind. I'm amazed that the effects of the treatments are lasting this long.

I'd recommend CranioSacral Therapy and especially the intensive format to anyone who is suffering from ANY kind of pain! For me, this experience of (w)holistic treatment has been a blessing from God.

David Meggyesy

St. Louis Cardinals  
1963 - 1969 :

My four day CranioSacral Intensive experience at the Upledger Institute demonstrated one major thing - the power of Release; the release of pain, tension, and restricted movement caused by my football injuries. All seven of us, six former NFL players and one CFL player have been carrying around in our bodies and emotions the effects of these injuries. We all spoke about the negative effect our injuries have had on our loved ones. We were in pain and angry because we often said, during our group sessions, we did not know where our anger was coming from. We realized our being pissed off a lot was coming from the tension and pain caused by our football injuries, often not remembered. Everyone said during the five days, "wow, I had forgotten about that one".

The intensive released a major immobility in my damaged right shoulder and lower back, where I previously had two surgeries. What a relief, which produced a wonderful overall feeling of being "freed up", including the ability to freely move my right arm and shoulder for the first time in a long time.

I highly recommend CranioSacral Therapy to anyone who has played football, for sure, anyone who has played at the higher levels of the game. CranioSacral Therapy was a revelation, what a gift.



# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Eric Williams

Detroit Lions, Washington Redskins  
1984 - 1993 :

When I accepted the invite from Ricky Williams' Foundation, to participate in a CranioSacral study, I had no idea what I was getting myself in to. Actually, I accepted, because I thought it would be a free week on a Florida beach, along with some type of massage therapy.

After of just a few days, my mood, my emotions and body had such a drastic change, it's really hard to put into words. My chronic pain was drastically reduced and my range of motion on 99% of my body parts increased significantly.

I can't explain what they did or how they did it. All I know is, I'd do it again in heartbeat if offered.

Phil Jones

Toronto Argonauts  
1980 - 1986 :

My experience with CranioSacral Therapy was life changing. The release of blockages to the CranioSacral system that were caused by numerous injuries (including many hard head hits and 10 Arthroscopic knee surgeries followed by

Bi Lateral knee replacements) brought vivid memories of forgotten injuries which caused powerful emotional releases followed by a feeling of calm and balance which remains with me 2 weeks later. My sleep is now deep and sound.

My elbow which was surgically repaired causing the inability to do certain tasks such as doing up the top button on my shirt has gained significant range of motion. I believe strongly in this therapy as a part of every person's well-being and know that the balance it brings would be vital to every ball players' productivity. I feel that it would also speed up the healing process from all injuries and that is worth a lot of money to any team!

Since returning I have recommended it to my father who suffers from post Shingle Neuralgia, a friend with Bells Palsy, my wife and daughter - both with back and neck injuries, and a colleague with spinal damage from a severe car crash.

I will continue to preach its benefits to any and all people that I come in contact with.  
I sincerely hope that this will become standard treatment for all professional athletes.

# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

George Visger:  
New York Jets, San Francisco 49ers  
1980 - 1981

I am one of the two returning players to undergo treatment at the Ricky Williams/Upledger Foundation NFL pilot study.

My NFL career was cut short in 1981 when I developed hydrocephalus (water on the brain) from concussions and underwent 3 emergency VP shunt brain surgeries in 8 months and was given last rites at age 23. During a 10 month period in 86 - 87 I survived 5 additional emergency brain surgeries and several grand mal seizures, and underwent my 9<sup>th</sup> emergency shunt surgery in 1993.

Since 1981 I have struggled with major short-term memory issues, daily headaches, insomnia and anger management issues. The anger comes primarily from frustrations at not being able to accomplish what I used to do subconsciously. My condition had deteriorated to such an extent that I was on 4 different dementia medicines in 2010. When I arrived at the Upledger Clinic for the first protocol treatment in 2014, I had serious doubts about the effectiveness of what I perceived to be only a placebo effect. In addition I was two days into one of my many multiple day migraines I've had since my first surgery, and as was normal for me, had not had more than 3-4 hours sleep a night for the prior 6 days, including zero sleep the night before. During the second day of intensive CranioSacral Therapy, Dr. Barral "released" something in my skull. Immediately the therapist on my right ankle asked if I felt it, *before* I mentioned my headache had just disappeared. That night I slept 9 hours. Nearly double my average night sleep for the prior several years.

By the end of the week, all my pre-test neuro cognitive and motor skills tests showed improvement. After returning home to Sacramento I continued to receive CranioSacral Therapy from a local therapist.

During this year's 2015 session, I showed even more improvement, and with some baseline tests improving over 22%. In addition my overall mental state is much clearer, and my ability to focus and handle stressful situations has improved dramatically.

As a well known traumatic brain injury consultant with The Visger Group, we have now incorporated CranioSacral Therapy, Visceral Manipulation and Neural Manipulation into the soon to be released, *The Visger Group Game Plan for Traumatic Brain Injury Recovery* as the most effective treatment I have undergone in 35 years of living with a traumatic brain injury.

CranioSacral Therapy is literally a game changer for many of us TBI survivors, and I will forever be indebted to Ricky Williams, John Matthew Upledger and the amazing cadre of dedicated therapists who helped put my life back on track.

Short Choppy Steps,

George Visger  
Biologist and TBI Consultant  
The Visger Group-Traumatic Brain Injury Consulting  
[www.thevisgergroup.org](http://www.thevisgergroup.org)  
[visgergeorge@gmail.com](mailto:visgergeorge@gmail.com)



# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Chris Borland

San Francisco 49ers  
2014 :

After 10 intensive treatments of CranioSacral Therapy over the course of 5 days I feel largely different mentally and emotionally. Throughout the five days of treatment I became increasingly relaxed and more in touch with my inner thoughts and feelings. The multiple therapists that worked on me at a time encouraged deep relaxation and assisted me in meditation. It was unlike anything I've previously experienced!

I have recommended CranioSacral Therapy to family members and friends reluctant to treat chronic stress, depression, and anxiety with medications that may adversely affect their health as much or more than their ailment.

I think CranioSacral Therapy can be a revelation for former football players who've become accustomed to burying the pain of their injuries. CST allows players an opportunity to address physical issues they've long ignored both mentally and emotionally.

Nesby Glasgow

Baltimore / Indianapolis Colts, Seattle Seahawks  
1979 - 1992 :

My experience at the Upledger Clinic in Palm Beach Gardens was one of the most positive transformative experiences I've ever encountered. In my opinion, CranioSacral Therapy is a game changer. When I learned the practice has been around for over 35 years and yet is not a common practice I was astonished!

After 3 days of going through the process I realized how unique the techniques and therapy are because the treatments were so gentle yet I'd get up from the table feeling profoundly better. From the top of my head to the tips of my toes good changes within my body occurred again and again. My body and mind were supported to return to their optimal state.

Amazingly, the therapist were able to touch areas of my body and accurately assess what was happening there and identify old injuries in other, seemingly not connected areas of my body. And they were spot on!

Trying to explain how CranioSacral Therapy works to someone who has not experienced it is hard to put into words for me. But it's definitely something I would recommend to everyone that's ever played football and had an injury. I think it's likely that getting this type of treatment as soon as possible when injured would help a lot!

# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Markus Koch

Washington Redskins  
1986 - 1992 :

The early years of life after football were in many respects much more difficult than playing the game itself. I had thought I'd left the physical injuries behind when I retired. I was not prepared in any way to deal with the physical pain, let alone the inexplicable emotional pain and turmoil of buried hurt.

By 1999 I was in difficult straits. I'd lost most of the feeling in my right leg due to a spinal fracture incurred in 1988. I was severely depressed without knowing why, and I was having major issues with short term memory loss. I had no health insurance.

I was fortunate enough to live in an area with an abundance of natural health practitioners. My work at the time was carpentry, and I was able to barter skills, building bookshelves in trade for help with my pain. I received acupuncture, massage, and acupressure, which all began to help me feel better. I got into yoga and learned how to work with my body differently. My physical body improved along with my ability to remember what happened yesterday. I began to study and eventually became a practicing healthcare professional myself.

Based on my own personal experiences with CranioSacral Therapy, Visceral Manipulation and Neural Manipulation, and in witnessing the profoundly positive results it has produced in other clients, I am absolutely certain that these modalities can be a highly appropriate and effective measure in assisting the physical, mental and emotional struggles commonly faced by those who are engaged in extreme stress professions, such as professional football or military service or emergency response duty.

As I look back to extreme pain and dysfunction I was in twenty some odd years ago, to the excellent state of health I now enjoy, I marvel that I was able to make that journey without drugs, without invasive surgeries and without undertaking crippling monetary expense.

It seems common sense to me that the future of effective medicine lies in combining and incorporating allopathic medicine with the best of hands on techniques, like the CranioSacral work. I would think healthcare insurers would be extremely interested in the cost effectiveness of CST as a first step "go to" before radical invasive surgical procedures, when possible.

# TESTIMONIALS - THE UPLEDGER INSTITUTE'S CONCUSSION INTENSIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Two years ago I was introduced to the Upledger Institute through the Ricky Williams Concussion Pilot, and was given the opportunity to experience a week of intensive treatment at the clinic in Florida. The low grade pain in my back and leg eased more. Some lingering emotional issues that I was still unaware of emerged and as they came to light and released I experienced a coinciding physical loosening of long held contraction. The week was impressionable enough for me to enroll in another CranioSacral Intensive a few months later. It was there that a skilled therapist got so deep into my gut that my psoas, which had for years been guarding the backside of the lumbar spinal fracture finally released, and the last remnants of what had been 26 years of chronic low back pain disappeared for good.

Along with the most impressive release of long held body pain was the more subtle work of mobilizing the fascia and sutures of my skull. There were some astonishing click and pops in my head, and an accompanying sensation of relief as old impacts were drawn out of structure and tissue that had been the leading edge of impact. As I have become more familiar with the Upledger CranioSacral work I've learned they have a 35 year track record of extremely high success at minimizing dysfunction associated with traumatic brain injuries.

The more experience I have with Upledger Institute and their affiliated schools' body of work, the more valuable I find it. I now incorporate CranioSacral Therapy as part of my professional practice because it is so effective for a myriad of issues.



# AT OUR OFFICE

- Patients seek us out:
  - “Last stop”
  - “Someone told me to come, but I don’t know what it is”
  - Frustration, Desperation, Hopeless....etc
- Listening
- Evaluation of Symptoms
- Treatment
  - What we find?



# AT OUR OFFICE

- Expectations from Treatment
  - What patients can expect
  - What patients may experience
  - What other practitioners may notice
- Treatment Recommendations for CST
  - Frequency
  - Plan of Care
  - Consideration for other therapies





# CASE STUDIES

- Similarities
- Differences
- Changes Noted



# DEMONSTRATION OF CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

- Let's play with energy
  - 2 hands together pull apart
- Direction of Energy
  - Hands surrounding injury
- Still point
  - “Reset” to the Central Nervous System



# DEMONSTRATION OF CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY

- Volunteer?
  - Symptoms
  - Presentation
  - Findings
  - Changes noted



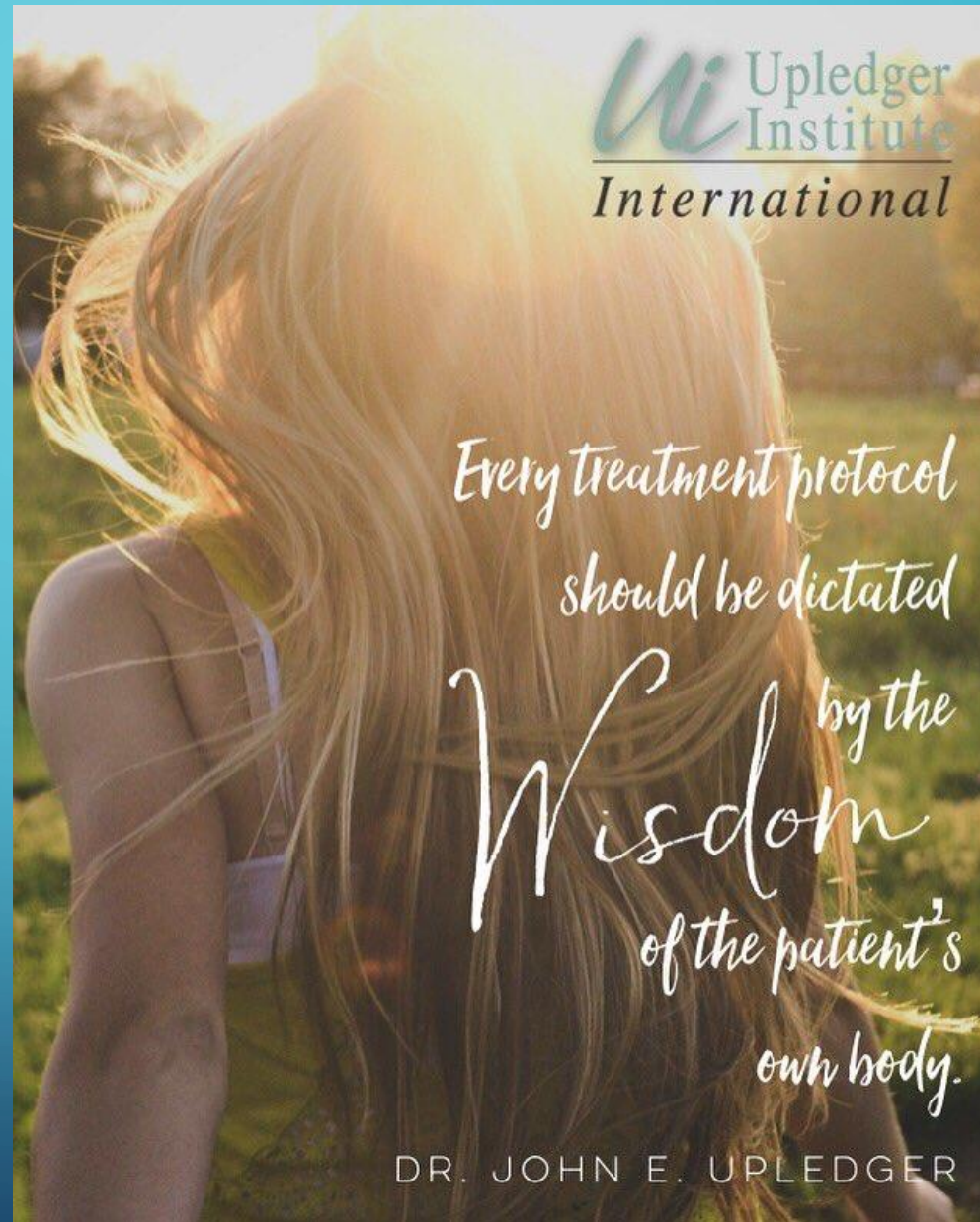
# FINAL THOUGHTS

- With CranioSacral Therapy, patients will experience a change in their Central Nervous System
  - Calming and Balancing – out of “Fight or Flight”
  - Increases blood flow and the flow of Cerebral Spinal Fluid to improve healing and removal of waste
- Changes should occur in both structure and function
- CranioSacral Therapy should be considered for all patients experiencing symptoms from head trauma and post-concussion syndrome



# FINAL THOUGHTS

- To find a Practitioner
  - Know their experience/background
- Upledger Institute's Website  
<https://www.iahp.com/pages/search/index.php>





# QUESTIONS/CONTACT INFORMATION

- Any Questions?
- Connectivity Therapy and Holistic Health
  - <http://www.connectivitytherapy.com>
  - 732-224-1280
  - Email: [connectivitytherapy@gmail.com](mailto:connectivitytherapy@gmail.com)

