

PRIMITIVE REFLEXES

Primitive reflexes are automatic stereotypic movements directed from the brainstem and require no cortical involvement (thought). They are needed for survival and development in the womb and in the early months of life. However, as higher more sophisticated centers of the brain begin to mature, these primitive reflexes become a nuisance and must be abated in order for proper neurological organization of the brain to develop.

What happens if Primitive Reflexes don't go away?

If Primitive Reflexes are retained past the first year of life, they can interfere with social, academic, and motor learning. Children with learning disorders, concussions, ADHD, Autism Spectrum, and various other neurodevelopmental disorders are known to have retained Primitive Reflexes contributing to their symptoms and level of dysfunction.

Each reflex is associated with one or more of the Sensory Processing Systems: Auditory, Taste, Tactile, Smell, Visual, Vestibular, Proprioceptive and/or Interoceptive. If retained, a child/person may experience dysfunction within one or several of the sensory processing systems. This can lead to what is known as Sensory Processing Disorder.

Causes of Retained Primitive Reflexes

Children born via cesarean section, trauma, toxicity exposure, anesthetics, etc. are more at risk at having retained Primitive Reflexes. Other causes may be insufficient tummy time as an infant, little or no creeping or crawling, early walking, head injuries, excessive falls, and chronic ear infections.

Treatment

Through various specific movement and exercise protocols offered at our office, Primitive Reflexes can be inhibited – allowing for proper neurological development to take place. The long term results of such treatment are better social behavior, improvement in academic and motor learning, and overall improvement in physical health, emotional health, and well being. Inhibition of Primitive Reflexes will also help develop a stronger and healthier functioning Sensory Processing system.