413 – Neuro Developmental Disorders

With Anji Gopal and Darren Barnes-Heath

The interview covered the role of primitive reflexes in neurodevelopmental disorders, particularly in children with conditions like autism, ADHD, and dyslexia.

The speaker, Darren Barnes-Heath, is a chiropractor who specializes in treating children with these types of issues using a functional neurology approach. He explained how retained primitive reflexes can impact sensory processing, motor control, and emotional regulation, and describes various assessment and treatment techniques he uses to address these underlying neurological factors.

- Primitive reflexes are important for early development but should become inhibited as the brain matures.
- Retained primitive reflexes can lead to issues with sensory processing, motor control, and emotional regulation.
- Children with neurodevelopmental disorders often exhibit asymmetries in brain function, with one side being less active than the other.
- Assessing primitive reflexes can provide insight into which areas of the brain are underdeveloped.
- Treatment involves a multi-modal approach of sensory stimulation, proprioceptive input, and gentle manual therapy.
- The speaker provided examples of specific primitive reflexes, such as the Moro, Babinski, and asymmetric tonic neck reflex, and how they can impact a child's development.
- He discussed research showing the relationship between primitive reflex retention and cognitive decline, as well as the differences in brain lateralization observed in various neurodevelopmental conditions.
- The speaker demonstrated assessment techniques for evaluating primitive reflexes and explains how he uses sensory stimulation, proprioceptive input, and manual therapy to help integrate these reflexes.

There were a number of recurring themes:

- The importance of primitive reflex integration for healthy brain development and function.
- The role of sensory processing and proprioception in motor control and emotional regulation.

- The concept of brain lateralization and how imbalances in brain function can contribute to neurodevelopmental issues.
- The growing understanding of the gut-brain connection and the impact of inflammation on brain development.
- The use of multi-modal, sensory-based interventions to address underlying neurological factors in neurodevelopmental disorders.
- The potential for early identification and treatment of primitive reflex issues to improve outcomes for children with these conditions.

The information provided could have a significant impact on how healthcare professionals, particularly those working with children, approach the assessment and treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders.

The emphasis on primitive reflex integration and the use of sensory-based interventions could lead to improved outcomes for patients and a better understanding of the underlying neurological factors involved in these conditions.