

Visceral Osteopathy

Viscera is the collective name for the organs present in the chest and abdomen. Visceral osteopathy seeks to release tensions from the tissues of these organs to allow them to function more efficiently. When there is a build up of tension in these tissues, they can affect how the muscular-skeletal system around them is able to work. One of the things which can cause poor movement through the viscera and associated tissues, is post surgical scar tissue and adhesions. Osteopaths can assess how well the organs and associated tissues are moving and whether they may be creating pain or discomfort locally and also further afield. This can be the hidden cause of chronic neck, chest, back and pelvic pain.

Visceral osteopathy may also aid functional problems of poor digestion or restricted breathing by directly addressing poor mobility of the organs in question.

What can cause these problems?

- After surgery as your wound heals it can form tight scarred areas. The scarring can be deep, and as it takes months or even a year to form, it often goes unnoticed.
- Bacterial or viral infections such as pneumonia or influenza (“flu”) can damage organs and membranes.
- Viscera can be injured if your body suffers trauma, such as a car crash. The shock from the seatbelt can travel through your chest and be felt in the stomach, spleen, heart and left kidney.
- You may have been born with a damaged organ or a condition such as scleroderma, a disease marked by progressive hardening of the skin in various patches combined with rigidity of the underlying tissue. Even though that condition may be untreatable it is usually possible to treat other areas to improve your general health and help you to compensate more easily.

How are these problems treated?

As with all osteopathic treatment the aim is to restore normal mobility. The specialised osteopathic techniques used gently restore movement to the restricted area. These are generally small and precise movements and do not usually cause pain. Combined with the use of carefully directed pressure, the tissues are encouraged to release. This process may be considered to be similar to turning a key in a stiff lock.

Osteopaths are interested in how the whole body functions as a unit. Whether a person has strained a joint in their low back, or developed adhesions in tissues in their abdomen, the Osteopath is able to assess and treat ongoing affects of both of these conditions.