

KIDS FIRST



Infantile Colic Part II

In the last article, we talked about what colic is, and isn't. Today we'll cover what actually causes colic and what can be done to cure it.

In my experience in dealing with thousands of children and babies, I found that often a vertebral subluxation in the spine affecting the way the nervous system controls bowel function is usually the cause of colic. Any chiropractor involved in seeing children will attest to this fact. You must understand that the digestive system is essentially a long tube (refer to my column on "Tummy

Troubles") and is made of muscle walls, which are under the direct control of the nervous system. I find that a vertebral subluxation will reduce the amount of information flowing from the brain to the large intestine in the case of colic - thereby reducing the normal function and motility (movement and function) of the large intestine. This causes food to "stick around" in the large intestine longer than it should and it tends to produce gas. This gas causes distention of the intestinal wall, causing pain and crying. The cry of the baby is really for help.

Children who are affected by colic generally show a wonderful response in the hands of a chiropractor. Most often I find results within the first week of care, but the care must be directed at the correction of the subluxation which is at the root of the problem, not simply

giving the child mere relief. If mere relief is given only, there is a very high possibility of the subluxation becoming chronic and then causing arthritic degeneration, colitis, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, etc., later on in life. Not a desirable situation.

I should mention that I have often been asked if there are any nutritional products parents can give their colicky baby to ease their discomfort. I must tell you that I feel uncomfortable giving such advice when it involves an infant. I don't feel that their physiology is ready to accept outside help. Parents can ease some discomfort by applying warm towels to the abdominal area. This causes reflex relaxation of the muscles of the bowels and will generally ease pain to a degree. If the child is older, mom can try a little slippery elm powder and also test for lactose

intolerance which may also produce gas in the bowel. The most important issue here is to find out why your baby has colic. To treat only the pain, will provide generally short-term relief. I have always felt that this is a most important distinction.

For those of you who have children affected by colic, or know of a new mom who has a child so afflicted, I suggest you call us without delay.

If you need additional information, please call me personally at 605-665-8228 and visit my website: www.plathwellness.com

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Top Business Story In '11: Europe Financial Crisis

BY JONATHAN FAHEY
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Europe took the financial world on a stomach-churning ride in 2011.

The rising threat of default by heavily indebted European countries spread fear across financial markets and weighed on economies worldwide. As the year came to a close, banks and investors nervously watched Europe's political and financial leaders scramble to prevent the 17-nation eurozone from breaking apart.

Several of the other biggest business stories of the year highlighted the global economy's linkages: A British phone-hacking scandal shook the foundations of Rupert Murdoch's U.S.-based media empire; a nuclear disaster in Japan stymied auto plants in the U.S. and beyond; and the price of gasoline surged because of unrest in the Middle East and growing demand in Asia and Latin America.

In the U.S., political squabbling led to the first credit downgrade for government debt, the economy suffered its fourth straight disappointing year and Apple founder Steve Jobs died.

The European financial crisis was chosen as the top business story of the year by business editors at The Associated Press. The sluggish U.S. economy came in second, followed by the death of Jobs.

1. EUROPEAN FINANCIAL CRISIS. The government-debt crunch rattled Europe's financial system and weighed on the global economy. Portugal became the third European country, after Greece and Ireland the year before, to require a bailout as its borrowing costs soared. And investors grew worried that countries with much larger debts, such as Spain and Italy, would also need help.

Financial markets were volatile all year as hopes rose and then were dashed that force-

ful steps would be taken to prevent the financial crisis from becoming Europe's version of the 2008 collapse of Lehman Brothers, which triggered a global financial panic and deepened the Great Recession.

Banks worried that they or their partners wouldn't be able to cover losses if governments defaulted, so they cut back on lending. European governments, facing ever higher borrowing costs, reined in spending — a policy response that is expected to stunt much-needed economic growth. Analysts estimate the slowdown in Europe, America's No. 1 trading partner, will cut U.S. economic growth next year.

2. BAD U.S. ECONOMY: **YEAR FOUR.** The Great Recession may have ended, but the economic recovery continued to disappoint. For the first six months of the year, the economy grew at an annual rate of just 0.9 percent. Growth improved to a 2 percent rate in the third quarter and a 3 percent growth rate is forecast for the fourth quarter.

Still, 2 1/2 years after economists say the recession ended, 25 million people remain unemployed or unable to find full-time work. The unemployment rate fell from 9 percent in October to 8.6 percent in November, providing a hopeful sign. Yet the housing market remained burdened by foreclosures and falling prices in many metropolitan areas. How to fix the economy became the top campaign issue for Republican presidential contenders.

3. STEVE JOBS DIES: The college dropout who helped popularize the personal computer and created the iPod, iPhone and iPad, died on October 5. That was two months after Apple Inc., which Jobs started in a Silicon Valley garage in 1976, briefly surpassed Exxon Mobil Corp. as the most valuable publicly traded company in the world.

Jobs cultivated a countercultural sensibility and a minimalist design ethic. He rolled out one

sensational product after another, even during the recession and as his health was failing. He first helped change computers from a geeky hobbyist's obsession to a necessity of modern life. In recent years, he upended the music business with the iPod and iTunes, transformed the smart phone market with the iPhone and created the tablet market with the iPad.

4. THE U.S. CREDIT DOWNGRADE: The inability of political leaders to come up with a long-term plan to reduce the federal budget deficit led the credit rating agency Standard & Poor's to take away Uncle Sam's sterling AAA credit rating for the first time. The political bickering enraged voters, spooked investors and led to the lowest consumer confidence level of the year. But the nation's long-term borrowing costs fell after the crisis. The reason: U.S. debt still looks safer to investors than almost everything else, especially European debt.

5. RUPERT MURDOCH AND THE HACKING SCANDAL: The man whose worldwide media empire thrives on covering scandal became the center of a dramatic one. A British tabloid newspaper owned by Murdoch's News Corp., which also owns Fox News and *The Wall Street Journal*, hacked the phone of a murdered schoolgirl. Murdoch was not charged with a crime, but an investigation by British authorities raised questions about Murdoch's ability to run his worldwide media empire. News Corp. fired several executives and closed the newspaper at the center of the scandal, the News of the World.

6. JAPAN EARTHQUAKE: An earthquake and tsunami that crippled the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear reactor, owned by Tokyo Electric Power Co., cut off supplies of crucial Japanese parts and idled factories thousands of miles away. Auto companies, especially Toyota and Honda, were hit hardest. Inventory of certain

models, especially hybrids, fell short at dealerships, reducing sales and sending retail prices higher. The worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl led countries around the world to reconsider nuclear power. Germany decided to abandon nuclear by 2022.

7. GASOLINE PRICES HIT ANNUAL RECORD: The retail price of gasoline averaged \$3.53 per gallon for the year, eclipsing the 2008 record of \$3.24 per gallon. Americans drove less and switched to more fuel efficient cars, but it wasn't enough to offset the higher prices. A bigger percentage of household income went into the gas tank in 2011 than any year since 1981. Economists say the high prices shaved half a percentage point off U.S. economic growth.

8. SOCIAL MEDIA IPOs TAKE OFF: Shares of the business social networking site LinkedIn more than doubled when it went public in May, recalling the froth of the dot-com boom. LinkedIn

was followed by large IPOs from online radio company Pandora Media, online discount site Groupon and social gaming site Zynga. But the market is treacherous: shares of Pandora, Groupon and Zynga all traded below their offering prices soon after they were listed. Market anticipation is high for a Facebook IPO in 2012.

9. OCCUPY WALL STREET: On Sept. 17, several hundred protesters gathered at a small plaza about a block from the New York Stock Exchange. They slept in tents, ate donated meals and protested income inequality and the influence of money in politics. The movement inspired protesters around the world who camped in city centers and business hubs to complain about unemployment, CEO pay and a decline in upward social mobility.

10. THE DOWNFALL OF MF GLOBAL AND JON CORZINE: The former governor, senator and co-chairman of Goldman

Sachs lost control of a small brokerage firm he agreed to run in 2010. Saddled with huge debt and risky bets on European bonds, MF Global was forced to file for bankruptcy protection on Halloween after trading partners and investors got spooked. It was soon discovered that \$1.2 billion in customer money was missing. Corzine told Congress he had no idea where the money went.

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At The Gas Pump, 2011 Was The Year Of The Big Squeeze

BY JONATHAN FAHEY
AP Energy Writer

NEW YORK — It's been 30 years since gasoline took such a big bite out of the family budget.

When the gifts from Grandma are unloaded and holiday travel is over, the typical American household will have spent \$4,155 filling up this year, a record. That is 8.4 percent of what the median family takes in, the highest share since 1981.

Gas averaged more than \$3.50 a gallon this year, another unfortunate record. And next year isn't likely to bring relief.

In the past, high gas prices in the United States have gone hand-in-hand with economic good times, making them less damaging to family finances. Now prices are high despite slow economic growth and weak demand.

That's because demand for crude oil is rising globally, especially in the developing nations of Asia and Latin America. But it puts the squeeze on the U.S., where unemployment is high and many people who have jobs aren't getting raises.

The trap has caught Michael Reed of Charlotte, N.C. He hasn't been able to find work since he lost his computer-support job in 2009. Now high gas prices are claiming more of what he has left. He and his wife won't exchange gifts this Christmas.

"I try to drive as little as possible so it doesn't take such a chunk out of my wallet," he says.

In 1981, when the economy was sliding into recession and oil prices were high because of Middle East turmoil, gas ate up 8.8 percent of the typical family budget, says Fred Rozell of the Oil Price Information Service.

Over the past decade, gas has taken up 5.7 percent of the family budget. If families had spent only 5.7 percent this year, they would have saved \$1,300.

For this year, gas should average \$3.53 per gallon. That's 76 cents more than last year. It's 29 cents per gallon more than 2008, when gas last set an annual record, \$3.24. That year, the price of oil hit a record in the summer but collapsed when the financial crisis struck in the fall.

Besides leaving families less money to eat out and go to the movies, high gas prices take a disproportionate toll on consumer confidence. People are more aware of small changes in gas prices because they drive past the signs all the time.

And a buck spent on gas has less bang in the economy than, say, a dollar spent at a restaurant. The U.S. is an oil-importing country, so many of the dollars spent on gas ultimately leave the country instead of being invested here in new ventures and jobs.

James Hamilton, an economics professor at the University of California, San Diego, who studies energy prices, estimates that high gasoline prices reduced economic growth by about 0.5 percent for the year — a substantial hit for an economy only growing at an annual rate of about 2 percent.

Still, it could be worse. The U.S. economy is much more fuel-efficient than it was during the oil spikes of the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980, for every \$1,000 of economic output, 1.07 barrels of oil were consumed. By 2010, it took half that — 0.53 barrels, says Judith Dwarkin, chief energy economist at ITG Investment Research.

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