

THE ECTODERM

(Collated by Michelle Wilkinson www.movingnaturally.co.uk)

At around 2 weeks gestation a disc forms and divides to become the outer, inner and middle tissue layers of the body. The outer layer is known as the ectoderm which forms the human skin and the nervous system.

Between 3 and 4 weeks the embryo's ectoderm begins to differentiate into the skin tissue which moves outwards and the neural tissue.

The hair, nails, tooth enamel and mammary glands are formed from ectoderm cells.

The skin turns inwards to line the orifices of mouth, nostrils and anal canal. These are sites where the ectoderm meets the inner tissue layer of the endoderm.

The skin and nervous system are reflections of each other. The skin is the outer surface of the brain while the brain is the deepest aspect of the skin. They form a single unit throughout a person's lifetime and are only made divisible through dissection or analytical abstraction.

Tactile experience with sensory organs' touch activation informs neural development. Therefore, positive physical touch and sensory stimulation from birth into childhood encourages a secure and responsive nervous system.

The ectoderm is the communication system of the body between the internal and external environment. It orchestrates bodily functions, records and stores behavioural/movement patterns, retrieves information, remembers, projects and interprets within the context of its life history.