



## Gut Instincts: Neuroscientists have Identified How the Vagus Nerve Communicates With the Brain

Written by Christopher Bergland

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The vagus nerve is constantly sending updated sensory information about the state of the body's organs upstream to your brain via afferent nerves. In fact, 80 to 90 percent of the nerve fibers in the vagus nerve are dedicated to communicating the state of your viscera up to your brain. (The terms afferent and efferent typically refer to nerves that lead into and out of the

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The vagus nerve exits from the lower portion of the skull through two foramina openings between the temporal and occipital cranial bones. The occipital bone fits on the atlas, the first cervical vertebra. Misalignment of the occipital bone or the atlas can disturb normal vagal regulation. As chiropractors, we have made adjustments to these areas that appear to restore vagal nerve system function. This supports regulation of the polyvagal system, a term coined by researcher Stephen Porges to include the parasympathetic, sympathetic, and so-called

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