

Physiotherapy Service
Out Patients East Level 2
Norfolk & Norwich
University
Hospital
Colney
Lane
Norwich
NR4 7UY
Direct Dial: 01603 286990

CERVICAL SPINE LEAFLET

We have received a Physiotherapy referral for you.

You have been placed on our waiting list and will be invited to attend an appointment as soon as one becomes available. Currently our waiting list is weeks. This is a rough guide as our waiting list fluctuates, so you may be seen sooner or later than this.

We will write to you 4-6 weeks before an appointment becomes available and ask you to telephone our office to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

In the meantime we hope you find the information in this leaflet useful to help you manage your current problem. The advice / exercises should help to speed up your recovery and maximize the effects of physiotherapy and may actually resolve the problem. If this is the case please contact the Physiotherapy Department to let us know that you no longer require your appointment.

In the unlikely event that you have any problems after following the advice in this leaflet, please contact the Physiotherapy Department on 01603 286990 between 8.30—4.00

Monday to Friday

THE FOLLOWING STRUCTURES MAY BE INVOLVED IN YOUR PAIN

LIGAMENTS - One of the structures that provide the stability in your neck.

MUSCLES - Very important structures which produce movement in your neck.

TENDONS - Structures which allow the muscles to attach to the bones.

NERVES - Structures which transmit impulses e.g. pain to the brain.

FOR THE FIRST 48 HOURS AFTER AN INJURY OR RE-INJURY

RELATIVE REST—Try to maintain a comfortable upright sitting position or if necessary lie down in a comfortable position for short periods (e.g. 20—30 minutes) Avoid sudden and / or large neck movements, prolonged postures e.g. working at a desk and change posture regularly.

If you have been supplied with a collar remove it regularly and perform regular neck movements (as per exercises overleaf) to prevent excess stiffness. As your symptoms ease wean yourself off the collar to prevent excess stiffness. Applying heat may allow muscles to relax and give some symptomatic relief.

AFTER 48 HOURS FROM THE INJURY

Perform gentle movements of the neck little and often—as per the exercises on the next page.

Ice and heat can help to reduce pain, swelling and bruising.

You may find it beneficial to use it before exercising. **DO NOT** use heat in the first 48 hours of your injury. Please follow the advice below as both ice and heat can cause burns. Only use if you can feel the difference between hot or cold.

Application of ice: Place a wet tea towel directly over your skin, then place a bag of frozen peas on top of the towel. Keep the peas on for 15 – 20 minutes, checking your skin from time to time. Repeat up to 3 times a day.

Application of Heat: Wrap a hot water bottle in a towel and place over the area. Keep it on for 15 – 20 minutes, checking your skin from time to time. Repeat up to three times a day.

EXERCISES

These exercises are an important part of your rehabilitation. They will help to reduce your pain, increase your range of movement and help restore normal function. The exercises should be carried out little and often (four times a day) and only move as far as pain allows. If they increase your pain then reduce the number or frequency of exercises, or have a rest for a couple of days before restarting

Lie on your back with knees bent and your head on a pillow.

Comfortably stretch your neck by lowering your chin, hold for 1-2 seconds and relax. Repeat as many times as you can comfortably

Sitting straight backed.

Pull your chin in keeping your neck and back straight. Do not tip your head up or down as you do this.

Hold this end position to feel a stretch or stop if pain starts.
Repeat little and often.

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