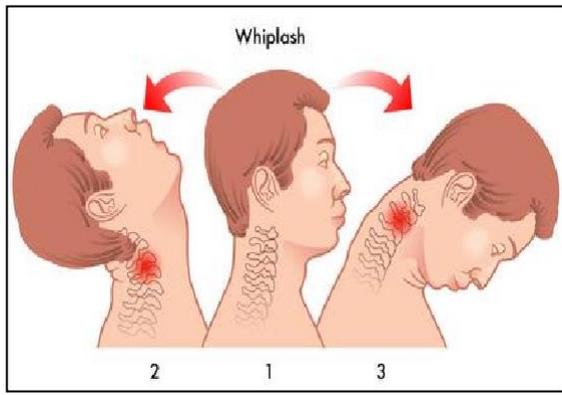


WHIPLASH INJURY

Whiplash is a neck injury caused by sudden movements of head. It is caused by forceful, rapid back and forth movement of neck commonly seen in Road traffic accidents, sports injuries, physical abuse and other injuries.

Whiplash results when muscles and ligaments of the neck overstretch beyond their normal range of motion. It is usually considered as mild condition and lasts for 3-6 months but can also rarely cause long term pain and discomfort.



Symptoms:

Symptoms usually appear within 24 hours of the incident that caused whiplash. Sometimes, symptoms may develop after few days and may include:

- Neck pain and stiffness
- Difficulty moving head
- Headaches, specifically at base of skull
- Tenderness in shoulder and upper back
- Tingling or numbness in arms

Some rare symptoms include ringing in ears, double or blurred vision, drop-attacks, difficulty swallowing or talking, and vertigo. These rare symptoms should last for only very short time immediately after incident. If they last longer or worsen ring 999 or consult your GP.

Do's and Don'ts:

- Follow your GP or Chemist advise on taking pain medications
- Try and do daily activities as pain allows
- Do not use a neck brace or collar unless advised by a doctor
- Do not avoid moving neck – it may hurt to move but helps with recovery

Treatment:

The treatment for whiplash involves managing pain and stiffness.

Self-management includes applying Ice pack for first 48-72 hours to reduce inflammation and then heat pack for pain relief. Either heat or ice pack wrapped in a cloth/ towel to be applied for 15-20 minutes, 2-3 times a day.

Physiotherapist will prescribe you simple exercises to build strength and flexibility in your neck.

Practice good posture and learn relaxation techniques to keep your neck muscles from straining and to help with recovery.

Exercise considerations:

- Do all the exercises within pain free limits, stretch pain is common with exercises and that should ease off within 30 minutes-1 hour after having done the exercises
- Post exercise soreness is quite common and could be felt up to 48 hours after having done the exercise regime. This should get better as you continue with the regime over time
- If any exercise worsens your symptoms, stop that exercise and seek advice from your physiotherapist.