

Whiplash

What is Whiplash?

Whiplash occurs when the head and neck are caused to suddenly jolt forwards and backwards. This commonly happens in road traffic accidents. It can also occur during sporting activities. It causes the soft tissue structures of the neck to be stretched.

What are the symptoms of whiplash?

- Pain and stiffness in the neck.
- Pain into the head, shoulders arms and/or shoulder blades.
- Some people find it hard to concentrate for a few days after the injury.

If you experience any of the following you must consult your GP:

- Pins and needles or numbness.
- Weakness in the arms.
- Visual disturbance.
- Headaches.
- Dizziness.
- Difficulty or pain on swallowing.

Treatment for Whiplash

You should try to keep your neck moving as normally as possible. Do not let it stiffen up.

Below are some exercises that will help keep the neck moving. Gradually try to increase your neck movements.

You **must** stop the exercise and consult your doctor if you experience any:

- Dizziness.
- Changes in your vision.
- Pins and needles or numbness.
- Weakness in the arms.

Pain relief

Your GP or Pharmacist will advise you on appropriate medications.

1.



Whilst you are sitting down, turn your head to look over your left shoulder until you feel a stretch. Repeat to the right side.

Repeat 5 times each way.

2.



Whilst you are sitting down, tilt your head towards one shoulder until you feel a stretch. Repeat to the other side.

Repeat 5 times each way.

3.



Whilst you are sitting down, keep your neck and back straight and pull your chin in. Keep your head level, do not look up or down.

Repeat 5 times.

4.



Whilst you are sitting, bend your head forwards until you feel a stretch behind your neck. Repeat 5 times.

Good posture

Sitting, standing and lying in a good postural position will help reduce the strain on your neck:

Remember to sit upright maintaining the curve in the low back (lordosis) and try not to let your chin poke forwards.

Bad Posture:



Good Posture



When sleeping do not lie on your front. Ensure that your head remains in line with your neck. You may wish to place a rolled up towel in your pillow case to form a support for your neck.