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advice please contact  
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# Neck Injury

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## General Advice

Neck pain is very common and could be due to accident or injury, the result of a road traffic accident or something as simple as a stumble, or it could be spontaneous e.g. pain felt due to no obvious cause.

The majority of neck pain will settle within a few days or weeks.

It's important to do the exercises you have been given as they can help:

- Reduce stiffness and pain
- Increase muscle strength and stamina
- Improve flexibility

If you do not exercise the neck muscles, they become weak and make you more prone to further neck strain. This results in a cycle of further strain and pain and further weakness. This is why collars are not recommended.

Take regular painkillers. We advise simple paracetamol and ibuprofen. You will not get as much benefit if you only take them occasionally or wait until the pain is severe.

Your doctor / practitioner will advise you about this in more detail.

## Posture

- Avoid slouching in the chair. Try to hold your neck straight.
- Where possible sit in a high backed chair with feet flat on floor.
- Always try to keep your shoulders relaxed.
- Keep mobile, avoiding staying in one position for too long.
- Do not sleep on too many pillows (2 maximum).
- Avoid sleeping on your front.

## Daily activities

- Wash your hair in the shower instead of bath or basin.
- Shower instead of bathing as your neck posture is poor in the bath.
- If you have to read or write, prop the material up in front of you to avoid craning the neck.
- Avoid stooping when standing e.g. put the washing-up bowl up on top of the draining board instead of stooping to use it in the sink.
- Do not drive until you can do quick movements of the head without feeling pain.

## Exercises

- **Neck Tilt:** tilt your head down to rest your chin on your chest, gently tense the neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return to neutral position looking forwards and repeat 5 times.
- **Neck Tilt (side to side):** Tilt your head down towards your shoulder, leading with your ear. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to centre and repeat on the opposite side. Repeat 5 times.
- **Neck Turn:** Turn your head towards one side, keeping your chin at the same height and moving within comfortable limits. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to the centre and repeat on the opposite side. Repeat 5 times.
- **Neck Stretch:** Keeping the rest of the body straight, push your chin forward so your throat is stretched. Gently tense your neck muscles and hold for 5 seconds. Return your head to centre and push it backwards, keeping your chin up. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.