

Whiplash and Associated Disorders

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Whiplash-Associated Disorders (WAD) is the term that has been adopted to define acute or sub-acute neck pain resulting from car, workplace or sporting accidents.

What are the common signs and symptoms of WAD?

The symptoms associated with WAD can vary, and may include headaches, neck or arm pain, dizziness, fatigue, difficulty sleeping, inability to concentrate, blurred vision, or a feeling that the head has to be supported ("heavy head syndrome").

What should I do if I have recently been involved in a car accident?

If you have recently suffered a motor vehicle accident you should consult your local doctor for an initial examination and appropriate diagnostic testing. Please bear in mind that over 60% of all whiplash injuries fully recover with time and appropriate treatment and management from a qualified health practitioner.

Do I need an X-ray?

Not necessarily. Often the damage caused by a whiplash injury will not show up on standard medical tests such as X-ray or CT scans. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, your treating practitioner will make the appropriate recommendations regarding further diagnostic testing.

What Should I Do In The First Week Following A Whiplash Injury?

Stage 1: Inflammatory Stage (1 – 4 days)

- If the pain is significant it is best managed with pain relieving medication (seek medical advice)
- It may be necessary for you to have a few easy days to allow symptoms and pathology to settle, at our centre we advise to rest by lying on your back on the bed rather than on the couch
- Neck rotations from side to side can be performed in this position (6 – 10 every hour)
- Also include 6 – 10 repetitions hourly of shoulder circles and shrugs/shoulder range of motion exercises
- You should consult your treating practitioner for exercise instructions
- You should also consult your treating practitioner about advice regarding the application of heat and/or ice.
- Try to walk for 15-20 minutes, 2 – 3 times each day.
- Refrain from sport of moderate intensity. NO CONTACT SPORT. NO HEAVY LIFTING-especially OVERHEAD

Stage 2: Gradual Return to Full Activity (4 days to 3 – 6 weeks)

This phase may be extended to 3 – 6 weeks post whiplash trauma. Consult your treating practitioner regarding the use of soft tissue, manipulation and specific neck and rehabilitation exercises.

For further information about Whiplash and Associated Disorders visit:

www.whiplashcentre.com or call our clinic and talk to one of our expert staff:

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