Neck Injury, Fracture
(Cervical Spine Fracture)

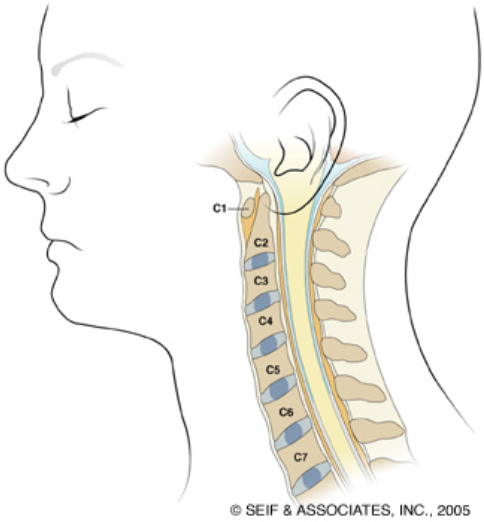
The muscles and ligaments in your neck have been stretched and a bone in your neck appears to be broken. This is known as a cervical spine fracture. This fracture appears to be stable. This means that the chances of it causing you problems while it is healing are very small. Your caregiver feels that no harm will come to you if you are followed up at home.

DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis of your injury had been made with x-rays of your neck. Often CT scans and or MRI is used to confirm the diagnosis and clarify how your injury should be treated. Generally it is the examination of your neck, arms and legs and the history of your injury which prompts the caregiver to order these tests.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Ice packs to the neck or areas of pain approximately every 1-2 hours for 20 to 30 minutes while awake. Do this for 2 days or as directed.
- If given a cervical collar, wear as instructed. Do not remove any collar unless instructed by a caregiver.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- If your caregiver has given you a follow up appointment if is very important to keep that appointment. Not keeping the appointment could result in a chronic or permanent injury, pain, and disability. If there is any problem keeping the appointment you must call back to this facility for assistance.



Recheck with the hospital or clinic after a radiologist has read your x-rays if this was not done when you were initially evaluated. This will determine if further studies are necessary. It is your responsibility to obtain your x-ray results. Ask your caregiver how you are to be informed about your x-ray results. X-rays may be repeated in one week to three weeks. This is to:

- Make sure that hairline fractures not detected on the first x-rays are not overlooked.
- Find ligaments that are completely disrupted which have left your neck unstable.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increasing pain in your neck.
- You develop difficulties swallowing or breathing.
- You have numbness, weakness, burning pain or movement problems in the arms or legs.
- You have difficulty walking.
- You develop bowel or bladder retention or incontinence.
- You have problems with coordination.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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