

Acute neck strain

Information for you

You have a minor soft tissue strain in your neck.

You have little or no tissue damage.

The pain may get worse over the first 24 hours.

It may take a few days to a few weeks to settle.

Your recovery depends on how you treat your neck.

- You should not wear a medical neck collar. This has no proven benefit and probably makes pain worse in the long term.
- Take a pain killer, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Avoid being stuck in the same position for long periods.
- Avoid tensing up.
- Massage and heat may be helpful.
- Try to keep a good posture.

If you experience any weakness or loss of feeling in your arms or legs contact your local Emergency Department.

If your pain does not settle within two weeks see your family doctor (GP) or self refer to physiotherapy via the musculoskeletal Advice and Triage Service on 0800 917 9390.

Neck exercises

Exercising your neck can help to reduce pain and restore normal range of movement. Some pain is to be expected. Repeat these exercises hourly.

Turns



Turn your head to one side. Hold for five seconds then return to starting position. Repeat five times on both sides.

Tilts



Tilt your head to one side. Hold for five seconds then return to starting position. Repeat five times on both sides.

Neck and upper back stretch



Turn your palms to face the ceiling. Stretch your arms behind you and look up to the ceiling to feel the stretch in your neck and upper back. Hold for five seconds. Repeat five times.



For more information, please contact:

University Hospital Crosshouse on 01563 521 133 and ask to be put through to the Emergency Department

University Hospital Ayr Emergency Department on 01292 614 522

or

Arran War Memorial Hospital on 01770 600777 and ask to be put through to the Emergency Department.

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