

Neck Pain

Cervical spondylosis and everyday neck strain

WHAT USUALLY CAUSES IT

In most people it is not a serious disease. It is **hours of the head held forward** — at a laptop, over a phone, or asleep on the stomach. The neck holds a 5 kg head, and every centimetre it drifts forward multiplies the load on the muscles.

"Cervical spondylosis" on an X-ray simply means normal age-related change. Almost everyone over 50 has it, and most have no pain at all. **The X-ray does not decide your treatment; your symptoms do.**

What helps

- **Fix the laptop and phone first.** Raise the screen to eye level, use a separate keyboard, bring the phone up to your eyes. See the ergonomics sheet — this resolves most cases in younger people.
- **Move every 30 minutes.** Roll the shoulders, look up, look far away.
- **Heat** for 15 minutes, two or three times a day, for stiffness and spasm.
- **Sleep correctly** — one pillow of the right height, never on the stomach.
- **Chin tucks:** sitting tall, draw the chin straight back to make a double chin without tilting the head. Hold 5 seconds, 10 times, several times a day. The single most useful exercise.
- **Gentle range of movement** — slowly turn to each side, tilt ear to shoulder. Never force, never jerk, never do fast circles.
- **Shoulder blade squeezes** to strengthen the upper back.

ABOUT THE CERVICAL COLLAR

Wear a collar **only if we have specifically advised it, and only for a short period.** A collar worn for weeks weakens the neck muscles and makes the problem worse and longer-lasting.

Never allow forceful neck manipulation or "cracking" by an untrained person. Serious injury, including stroke, has resulted from this.

COME BACK PROMPTLY IF YOU GET

Weakness, numbness or clumsiness in the hands — dropping things, difficulty with buttons · unsteadiness while walking · pain radiating down the arm with weakness · neck pain with fever · neck pain after a fall or accident · difficulty passing urine

Search: neck pain, cervical spondylosis, stiff neck, collar, neck exercise

