

# Whiplash

## Information and advice

Following a road accident, fall or other sudden impact, it's common to experience pain, stiffness and a pins and needles sensation in your neck and shoulders. This is often known as whiplash.

### Signs and symptoms

Whiplash can often be treated at home with painkillers and relaxation. If however you start to have trouble walking, or feeling your arms and legs, please consult your doctor as soon as possible.

### Medication

Painkillers can help reduce any discomfort you have. However if they're not helping, your GP may be able to prescribe something else.

### Driving

Provided you can look over both shoulders, return to driving as soon as possible. Take regular breaks on long journeys, walk around and stretch the neck and shoulders.

### At home

Making small adjustments to your pillows when you sleep, and the way you sit in chairs can help prevent you straining your neck further. Depending on your needs, it's unlikely you'll need to buy new furniture to help with your recovery.

### At work

Stay at work if possible, and remember to keep moving, stretch and change position regularly. If you work in an office, make sure your chair fits you and supports your back. Arrange your desk so that you can reach things like your computer and phone without straining your neck.

### Manual activity, gardening and housework

Modify activities if needed, but get back to normal as soon as possible, even if there is some discomfort with this.

### Exercise

It is helpful to stay active. Aim to carry on with your usual exercise, whether it's sports, gym, classes or other activities. It may be uncomfortable initially, so modify the intensity to suit what you can manage, steadily progressing back towards your normal levels of exercise.

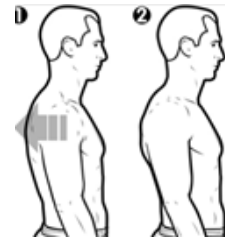
## Exercises

These exercises may help reduce your neck pain. You can do them standing or sitting. Follow the steps below slowly, but stop if you feel uncomfortable.

- Turn your head slowly to look over your left shoulder and hold for 5-10 secs. Then turn to look over your right shoulder and hold for 5-10 secs
- Repeat each side 5 times



- Shrug shoulders up, back and around. Hold for 5-10 secs then relax
- Repeat each side 5 times



- Sitting in a chair with your arms across your chest, turn your trunk to the right and hold for 5 secs. Then turn to the left
- Repeat each side 5 times



- Tilt your head slowly towards your left shoulder, and hold for 5-10 secs. Return to the middle, and repeat for your right shoulder
- Repeat each side 5 times



- Stretch both hands over your head as high as possible
- Hold for 5-10 secs
- Repeat each side 5 times



- Sitting with your back supported, gently tuck your chin into your chest
- Repeat 5 times. Hold for 3 secs



If you feel the exercises are making your symptoms worse, take a break. You can also speak to your GP for further help. This doesn't mean it's anything too serious. It may be that you need some extra help to deal with the symptoms, and you may be referred to a physiotherapist.

### How to contact us

If you need to contact us or require further information...

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Call: 0300 365 5678

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