



## Nonsurgical Treatment of Cervical Spine Problems

Your doctor may recommend rest, medications, physical therapy, and exercises to relieve your symptoms. Conservative care is usually successful, but if your symptoms don't subside, you and your doctor may decide surgery is the best option for you.

### Relieving Your Symptoms

Your doctor may recommend one or more of the following treatments to relieve your symptoms:

- **Medications** may help to reduce the pain and inflammation in your neck.
- **Bed rest** for a few days may relieve your symptoms. As you lie on your back, your neck should be supported by a special cervical pillow or a rolled-up towel.
- A **soft cervical collar** can help support your head while keeping your cervical spine aligned.
- **Traction** two or more times a day for a couple of weeks may relieve the pressure on the irritated nerves.

### Restoring Mobility and Strength

To help you regain mobility and strength in your neck, your doctor may recommend that you work with a physical therapist. Physical therapy may last for 4-6 weeks.

Physical therapy may include:

- **Exercises** to improve your neck's range of motion and strength.
- **Evaluation and correction** of posture and body movements that can affect your cervical spine.
- **Heat, massage, and traction** may also help to relieve your symptoms.

### Self-Care

Although your doctor and physical therapist are key members of your treatment team, the most important member may be you. It's up to you to follow their recommended treatment program.

You can protect your neck from further injury by practicing good posture whether you're sitting, standing, or moving. You may need to rearrange your work space so that your neck isn't under stress while you're working. And when lying down, support your neck with a flat pillow or rolled-up towel.

### Notes