



Whiplash



Overview

This is a common neck injury. It happens when your neck jerks back and forth quickly and violently. Your spine bends past its normal range of motion. This can injure the vertebrae of your cervical spine. It can damage the supporting ligaments and muscles in your neck.

Causes

Whiplash is commonly caused by rear-end collision automobile accidents. It can be caused by the quick jerking of a rollercoaster ride. It can be caused by contact sports such as football. It can also be caused by physical abuse.

Symptoms

Whiplash can be very painful. You may feel pain and stiffness in your neck at the time of your injury, or it may begin days later. You may also have pain in your shoulders, back and arms. You may not be able to twist or bend your neck normally. You may have headaches and dizziness. Some people also experience complications with hearing, vision or memory. These can become chronic problems.

Treatment

Treatment options may include rest, medications and injections. You may benefit from a soft cervical collar. Physical therapy can also be an important part of your recovery. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.