

- PHYSIOTHERAPY ADVICE FOR NON - ACUTE NECK PAIN

There are many causes of neck pain, with or without arm pain. Not all referred pain is nerve pain i.e. 'trapped' or 'squeezed' nerves. The joints, discs, ligaments and muscles also refer pain to the arm and hand.

The advice and exercises should help to ease the pain and improve your movement. They should be done very gently at first and you should only move as far as pain allows. **DO NOT PUSH THROUGH PAIN.**

You should gradually be able to move further before the pain comes on.

If the exercises make the pain worse, especially any referred pain, then stop them, continue with medication and other advice and then try them again in a few days. If the pain continues to get worse then return to the G.P or Physiotherapist who issued this leaflet.

Advice

- When lying, place a small rolled up towel in the bottom half of your pillow case, this will help support the curve of your neck. If you lie on your side usually 2 pillows are needed in order to keep your neck straight.
- When sitting support your back with a roll in your waist line.
- Use heat over the neck, a hot water bottle (wrapped in a towel), a damp warm towel, a heat pack or wheat bag, which are warmed in the microwave. Leave on for 20 minutes.
- Avoid prolonged postural strain in poor positions.

Exercises Repeat 3 times a day.

In lying, place your head on a book or a pile of magazines, so that your head feels level. The aim is to gradually reduce the size of the book.

- 1) Gently tuck the chin in, until you feel a pull or pain at the back of the neck and relax. Repeat 5 - 10 times. This can sometimes cause headaches, if so leave this one for a week then try again.
- 2) Turn the head to the left as far as comfortable, then turn it slowly to the right, repeat 5 times each side.
- 3) Slide the left ear to the left shoulder and repeat to the right , 5 times.
- 4) Place your hands on your stomach, gently stretch your elbow towards your feet, until you feel a pull at the side of your neck, hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat 5 times each side.
- 5) Lie on your side with 2 pillows, place the upper arm along your body. Gently roll the shoulder forwards and then backwards, taking the shoulder blade towards the spine (keep head and body still) Repeat x10 .

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