

## Injuries to the Spine, Nerves and Muscles

### *There is nothing soft about soft tissue injury*

If you have been in a car crash you may have experienced the most common injury to the upper spine, your neck. Common symptoms include joint pain, muscle pain, headaches, arm pain and leg pain. These symptoms occur when the vertebral joints and associated muscles and nerves are subjected to uncommon forces and movements associated with a car crash. It is important that you have an examination by your family chiropractor as soon as possible to support the recovery process.

# After the Crash

*Taking the soft out of soft tissue injury*



**British Columbia Chiropractic Association**



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## After the Crash

- Some people develop pain, stiffness and other symptoms 7-10 days after an accident. This is not unusual, however, do not delay in seeking treatment from your chiropractic doctor.
- Severe symptoms such as headache or arm/leg pain are also common. Advise your chiropractic doctor as soon as possible.

- It is important to be aware that the effects of substantive crashes may recur over 6-18 months. Symptoms and effects will lessen gradually.
- For most people, the pain and other symptoms associated with spinal injury usually decreases with gradual return to normal activity.
- Most injuries are not serious and people often recover to their pre-accident condition. The amount of disruption to normal activities varies with the circumstances of the crash.

## Your Recovery

### DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Consult your chiropractor for examination, diagnosis and to discuss your recovery options. Your chiropractor may recommend steps to treat any pain you experience including:

- Necessary spine and related care
- Modification to current activities
- Home stretching and strengthening exercises
- Ergonomic advice

Once you and your chiropractor have agreed on a treatment plan, it is important that you follow your chiropractor's advice to support the recovery process.

### PREVENTION

Closer head restraints can be twice as effective in preventing injuries as those that are set too far back. To ensure the head restraint is adjusted correctly:

- Raise your headrest so the top of it is at least level with the top of your ears.
- Your headrest should be as close as possible to the back of your head.
- Make these adjustments each time you ride in a vehicle with an adjustable headrest.
- Always wear your seatbelt when you are in a moving vehicle. The belt should be securely fastened and rest snugly across your waist and shoulder.
- Drive safely. Following the rules of the road will significantly lower your risk of an accident.

## Resources

This brochure provides general information about the spine and related injuries. Always consult your family chiropractor for diagnosis and treatment.

### BCCA Guidelines

[www.bcchiro.com/bcca/documents/BCCAWADGuidelines.pdf](http://www.bcchiro.com/bcca/documents/BCCAWADGuidelines.pdf)

## ARTICLES

### The Anatomy and Biomechanics of Acute and Chronic Whiplash Injury

*Traffic Injury Prevention, Volume 10, Number 2, April 2009*

Gunter P. Siegmund, PhD, PEng, Beth A. Winkelstein, PhD, BSE, Paul C. Ivancic, PhD, Mats Y. Svensson, PhD and Anita Vasavada, PhD

### A Systematic Approach to Clinical Determinations of Causation in Symptomatic Spinal Disk Injury Following Motor Vehicle Crash Trauma

*PM&R, Volume 1, Issue 10*

Michael D. Freeman, PhD, MPH, DC, Christopher J. Centeno, MD, Sean S. Kohles, PhD

### Chronic neck pain and whiplash: A case control study relationship between acute whiplash injuries and chronic neck pain

*Pain Res Manag. 2006 Summer*

Michael D. Freeman, PhD, MPH, DC, Arthur C Croft DC MPH MS, Annette M. Rossignol ScD, Christopher J. Centeno MD, Whitney L. Elkins MPH

## WEBSITES

### ICBC - Safety Research

[www.icbc.com/road-safety/safety-research](http://www.icbc.com/road-safety/safety-research)

### BC Chiropractic Association - Find a Chiropractor

[http://www.bcchiro.com/code/find\\_bcca.php](http://www.bcchiro.com/code/find_bcca.php)