PromoteHealth
Physiotherapy & Performance

A confident, informed return to movement and sport

PATIENT INFORMATION GUIDE • WHIPLASH

Whiplash: moving towards recovery

Whiplash follows a sudden movement of the head and can cause neck pain, stiffness and headaches. Symptoms may be delayed. This guide is for recovery after serious injury has been ruled out.

YOUR RECOVERY ROADMAP

01	START HERE **Get checked**	Have neck pain after an accident assessed before starting exercises. A clinician can check movement, strength and nerve symptoms, and decide whether you need any tests.
02	RESTORE MOVEMENT **Move gently**	Once cleared to exercise, gently move your neck and shoulders within a manageable range. Little and often can help. Avoid forcing stretches or pushing through worsening symptoms.
03	KEEP ACTIVE **Adapt daily tasks**	Keep doing usual activities where possible. Break tasks into smaller amounts and change position regularly. Avoid prolonged rest or a neck collar unless specifically prescribed for another injury.
04	BUILD CAPACITY **Return gradually**	Build up work, hobbies and exercise in manageable steps. Your physiotherapist can tailor movement and strengthening exercises. You do not need to be symptom-free before returning to work.

WHAT ABOUT PAIN RELIEF?

Ask a pharmacist or GP about suitable pain relief to help you move. Check first if you take other medicines or have health conditions. Follow the packet or prescription instructions.

SUPPORT YOUR RECOVERY

Recovery often takes 2-3 months, sometimes longer. Stress after an accident can affect recovery. Tell your clinician about nightmares, anxiety or difficulty coping; support is available.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

Call 999: after a major accident with suspected neck injury, or with collapse, confusion or loss of consciousness. Severe headache or new loss of bladder or bowel control after an injury needs immediate emergency assessment.

Urgent GP / NHS 111: severe pain despite pain relief; tingling, new weakness in the arms or legs; difficulty walking or sitting upright; or an electric-shock feeling down the neck, back or limbs. Avoid driving or cycling until assessed.

Arrange a GP review: no improvement after 1 week, ineffective pain relief, or concerns about your symptoms. Do not drive if neck stiffness prevents safe head turning or medicines affect alertness.

INFORMED BY: NHS: Whiplash • NHS inform: Whiplash • CSP: Whiplash

Disclaimer: For general information only; not a replacement for professional medical advice or an individual rehabilitation plan.

GET IN TOUCH

www.promotehealth.co.uk

07446 836243 | info@promotehealth.co.uk

Physiotherapy in Abingdon | Online support available