



## Whiplash Advice

### What to do in the initial weeks following a whiplash injury

At the Hindmarsh Physiotherapy Clinic we follow a post trauma protocol that gives our patients the best possible chance to avoid long term consequences, these include:

#### Stage one: Inflammatory stage – initial 1-4 days post trauma.

- As a general guide, if at the time of impact you felt neck pain almost immediately then you should seek medical advice re imaging. If however, as is very typical, symptoms (usually neck/arm pain) commenced a few hours to a day post trauma then it is strongly recommended that you have a restful few days. This may mean taking a few days off work to take the weight off your head/neck and shoulders. The best way to do this is to lie flat in bed, not upright on the couch. During this time perform simple, gentle neck rotations, i.e. turn slowly to look over one shoulder-then the other. This can be performed up to 10 times on the hour. By all means get up regularly and do basic chores around the home, but no heavy lifting or lifting overhead initially, until symptoms start to settle. Also include 6-10 hourly shoulder shrugs and circles and basic arm/shoulder movements. We strongly recommend you see a facility, such as our Physio clinics, that is seeing and treating a lot of whiplash type patients. Some patients find the use of ice packs beneficial.
- Further to this initial routine we recommend regular walks of say 15-20 minutes duration, 2-3 times per day, or as tolerated.
- REFRAIN from sport or moderate activity during this acute period and certainly NO CONTACT SPORTS until symptoms have well and truly settled for over 48 hours – or ideally cleared by your therapist or GP.

#### Stage Two: Gradual return to full activity (day 4 to 3-6 weeks)

- This phase may extend to 3-6 weeks post whiplash trauma. At this time manual therapy is most appropriate. This may consist of: soft tissue massage, trigger point therapy, joint mobilisations or manipulations, heat, stretches and simple strengthening exercises.

#### If Symptoms persist beyond 6 -10 weeks

- In some cases, close to 40% in fact, whiplash symptoms may persist beyond the 6-10 week stage. If this is the case then neck strengthening becomes an important component to the road back to full recovery. An effective neck conditioning program has been designed at the Hindmarsh Physiotherapy Clinic. To find out more about our treatment and rehabilitation techniques, call and talk to one of our experienced Whiplash practitioners.

If you are suffering from Whiplash or Whiplash type symptoms (sore neck, headache, jaw pain, weak neck, a heavy head), then contact our team for a detailed evaluation to gain relief of your symptoms. Call us now on 8346 2000