

Cervical Spine Rehabilitation Post-Repairative Medicine Treatment

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- First 4 Days Post Treatment
 - **Limit activity for two days**; depending on the specific treatment as well as the type and severity of the injury.
 - **Walking is encouraged.**
 - **Do not move the neck through its full range of motion for the first 2-3 days.**
 - The concept for not stressing the muscles and ligaments of the neck is that the treatment was precisely placed into injury site and stressing these muscles and ligaments during this critical phase may displace some of the treatment. When muscles or tendons are loaded or stretched, they squeeze tightly together: picture wringing out a wet dishcloth (which we want to avoid during this phase).
 - For sleeping, we recommend use of a cervical pillow (“My Pillow” or “Mediflow water pillow”). It may be more comfortable to place a pillow under your knees, but this is not required.
 - Try to use your head rest when driving, or use a high-backed chair to sit in.
 - Avoid looking down at your cell phone, use your eyes to look down (avoid dropping your chin to your chest), and keep your chin tucked in (and not jutting forward).
 - Do not use anti-inflammatory medications for at least 10 days post-treatment

- For the next 2 to 3 weeks
 - Walk normally. Although your neck may be sore, it is ok to walk.
 - **Keep your chin in (jaw level, pull head straight back, ears over your shoulders) while using the computer, reading or driving.**
 - Range of motion
 - Gentle Neck Rotation and side bending, neck retractions
 - Prone props: Lie on stomach, prop up on elbows keeping back relaxed, hold for 10 seconds for 10 repetitions.
 - “Angel” Floor stretches
 - This is a critical exercise for getting your neck and upper back better. Lie down on the floor, positioned on back with knees bent. Place arms on the floor with a right-angle bend in your elbows. Allow forearms to gently stretch back to the floor with palms up. Attempt to get elbows and wrists resting on the floor, once you can do this slowly work your arms overhead. Flatten your lower back to the floor to engage your core as you do so.

- Two weeks to three weeks from treatment
 - Easy spinning (low resistance) on an exercise bike, either recumbent or sitting upright. Be sure to properly adjust the seat height so the leg is

straight at the bottom of the pedal stroke. Start at 20 minutes every other day and work up to 30 minutes per day. Gradually increase the resistance over 3 weeks. Do not stand and peddle. (Be sure to keep upright posture while on bike, ears over shoulders-no forward head.)

- Guidance to Physical Therapy (PT)
 - Start Cervical Spine PT at two to three weeks. The initial goals will be to restore posture, slowly restore full range of motion to the neck, strengthen core and address dysfunctional movement patterns. Your therapist will prescribe and guide you through strengthening exercise for upper back and core stability and foam roller exercises. Some brief (10 minutes or less) period of heat or ice therapy will not hurt the regenerative treatment. Avoid modalities such as any form of laser, electrical stimulation, ultrasound or iontophoresis for 4 weeks post procedure. Dry needling is fine if needed.
- During this time, avoid aggravating activities. Exercise is vital to good health and finding a way to cross train around your injury is important not only for your physical health, but for your mental health as well. Ask about cross training options for your injury.