

Don't forget Valentine's Day this Sunday!

Healthy Pathways February 2010

Whiplash - symptoms and treatment

What is Whiplash?

Whiplash is usually caused by motor vehicle accidents, most commonly referred to as a "rear-ender". The neck is suddenly and forcibly extended by the power of the accident. There may also be a secondary flexion force - the "rebound effect". These movements will typically be beyond the normal range of movement of the neck, and the result can be damage to bones, joints, soft tissues and nerves. When the neck and head are forcibly whipped forward on impact, and then forcibly whipped back, there is a possibility of damage to the soft tissues, including the tendons, muscles and ligaments. Severe whiplash can also injure the inter-vertebral joints of the spine, discs, cervical muscles and nerve roots.

“ early intervention is the key to a speedy recovery. If left untreated, pain and discomfort may become chronic and could affect the quality of your life...”

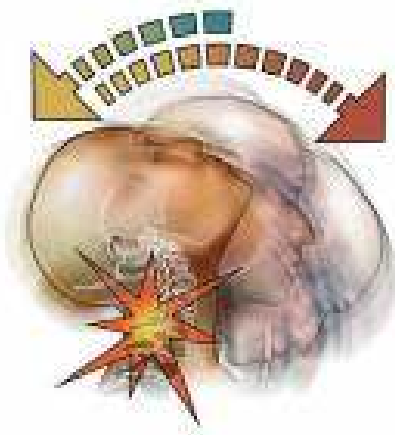
Some sporting injuries or forceful incidents involving the neck may also have the same effect, and create similar symptoms.

Symptoms of Whiplash

Typically, neck pain is experienced immediately following impact but some symptoms may not appear until 48-72 hours later.

Other symptoms may include:

- Neck stiffness
- Muscle pain and tension
- Headaches and dizziness
- Shoulder pain and back pain
- Pins and needles
- Arm pain or weakness
- Nausea



Whiplash is treatable and most symptoms will resolve over time; however, early intervention is the key to a speedy recovery. If left untreated, pain and discomfort may become chronic and could affect the quality of your life, so be sure to consult with your physician and massage therapist immediately following a whiplash injury.

Treatment of Whiplash

Treatment of whiplash associated disorders can be very difficult, owing to the many and varied structures which may be damaged during such a forceful accident. Whiplash often

becomes chronic (symptoms lasting longer than 6 months), however, given the correct treatment, most sufferers should gain significant relief from their symptoms.

Treatment methods might include:

- Medication - anti-inflammatory and pain medication may be prescribed by your G.P.
- Ice – apply ice or a cold pack to the neck for 15-20 minutes several times a day. This helps reduce pain and swelling.
- Heat – can help to relax tight or injured muscles. Heat should only be applied where there is no swelling or inflammation.
- Massage – therapy is one of the most effective therapies for releasing muscle tension and restoring balance to the musculoskeletal system. Massage therapy can help relax the muscles, increase and maintain range of motion, decrease stress and tension, increase circulation, and prevent and breakdown scar tissue formation.

Valentine's Day is this Sunday!
Not quite sure what to get?
We offer gift vouchers from \$15 for any treatment type. We can take payment over the phone and post it out to you. You don't even have to come in!

Whiplash – A case study

Presenting Symptoms

Anthony* came into the clinic complaining of a headache. He also said he had a deep dull ache at the back of his neck and his movement was restricted. When he tried to turn his head, he experienced a sharp pain in his neck. He had had a minor car accident a few days before but didn't worry about seeing anyone as he felt fine.

Treatment

A wheat bag was applied to warm up the muscles and allow the neck to relax. The treatment began with gentle movements and continued on to some firmer massage. Some trigger points were worked on and then Myofascial Release** techniques applied.

Outcome

His symptoms decreased on the first visit. Our therapist recommended that Anthony apply heat to the affected area and do some strengthening stretches and exercise. Follow up appointments resulted in increased mobility and less pain.

Whiplash symptoms can often flare up many years after a car accident. As the body tissue and bones degenerate, this can result in pain and weakness occurring. It is impossible to say that all people will respond to treatment in the same way. This can depend on the individual's dedication to their own well-being and participation in stretches and treatment when required.

If you have experienced Whiplash or need some advice ask to speak to our Musculoskeletal Therapist, Hayley.

** Not his real name. All of our client's records are confidential.*

*** Myofascial release (MFR) works with the fascia or connecting tissue between the muscles and uses gentle gliding movements and holding techniques to relax the muscles and help them to release.*



Nathan Stolz

Nathan has several years experience working on elite athletes as well as being employed in prestigious day spas in the Whitsundays and Alpine ski resorts. Employed for a season with the Broncos, Nathan has been exposed to a broad range of injury prevention and treatment programs. He brings with him a perfect blend of experience in injury prevention and maintenance as well as very desirable luxury 5 star spa relaxation techniques. A perfect serum for the busy office worker who has been working hard or playing hard.

Available: Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturdays

We'd like you to meet our new therapists!

Alan Giroud

Alan brings with him more than seven years of remedial experience and practice. His varied personal background covers many areas of labour intensive industries, giving him a comprehensive understanding of workplace stress and injury. Alan has also undertaken extensive study in Myofascial Release Therapy and so has many holistic approaches to promote health and well-being in his clients. Feeling Frazzled? Book in for a treatment with Alan !

Available: Tuesdays and Wednesdays



Warm up your loved ones this Valentine's Day!



Warm up with Zen!
Try our Zen herbal tincture to warm up aching body parts and to relieve aching muscles and injuries. Great for joint pain and swelling.



RELAX.....
Our wheat bags come in assorted shapes, colours and sizes. Perfect to warm you up and relieve your aching muscles.



Don't forget if you would like to come in for an hour on a Saturday we offer 10% off any treatment!



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