

Further information

Information on who to contact, ie web sites / telephone numbers of other departments / organisations which may be of help.

How to contact us

Inpatient Physiotherapy

Watford General Hospital

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Vicarage Road

Watford

WD18 0HB

NHS

**West Hertfordshire
Hospitals**
NHS Trust



A guide to...

Cervical Collars

How to fit and wear your neck collar
when lying down

Patient information

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email pals@whht.nhs.uk



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Inpatient Physiotherapy
Watford General Hospital

What is a hard collar and why do I need it?

A hard collar is provided to patients who require limited movement of their neck. This is normally to manage spinal fractures.

The collar will maintain your neck in the proper position while it is healing. Not being able to turn or shake your head may seem unusual, but limiting the motion of your neck is an important part of your treatment and will prevent further damage.

When and how long should I wear my collar

- Your collar should be worn at all times until advised otherwise by your consultant

Your collar must be changed in **LYING**

You will needperson/s to assist in this.

Head hold required? Yes / No.

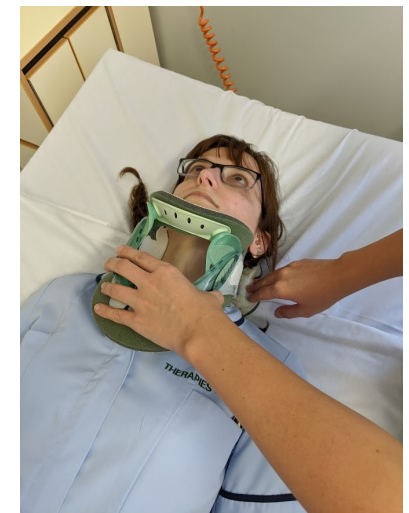
How to change your collar

To remove in lying

Lie flat in bed without a pillow. Keep your head still. Do not bend your neck forward, backward or from side to side

Before your family member/carer removes the collar, they need to note where the ends of the Velcro straps are. When they put the collar back on, the straps should be in the same position.

1. Undo the Velcro straps. Remove the front of the collar by sliding it forward



2. To remove the back panel; slide your hand under the neck, palm down onto the pad. Push down into the mattress as you slide your hand out, taking the pad with you.



To replace in lying

1. Slide the back panel carefully behind the neck. Do this by placing your palm on the panel and pushing down into the mattress to prevent movement of the neck.



2. Place the front panel under the patients chin. The sides of front section of the collar should be directed up to fit snugly and wrap around the sides of the neck



3. Reapply the Velcro straps ensuring a snug fit and even strap lengths.



Cleaning

1. Clean the front and back panels of the collar and replace the soiled pads with clean ones as directed below.
2. Peel the soiled pads off. Look carefully at the shape as you remove them so that you can reposition the clean pads properly. (The pads attach with Velcro)
3. Wash the pads with mild facial soap and water.
4. **Do not** use bleach or harsh detergents.
5. Thoroughly rinse the pads with clean water.
6. Wring out the excess water and squeeze in a towel.
7. Lay the pads out flat to air dry. It should take less than 60 minutes for them to dry.
8. Wipe the plastic collar shell clean with mild soap and water.

Changing the pads

1. Fold the pads in half then centre the pad in the shell.
2. Attach each pad in the same way.
3. Adjust pads as needed to make sure no plastic touches the skin.



Please note the following

1. The collar should be **tight** but **comfortable**. If the collar is not on tight enough it will not support your injury and you may experience pain or risk further damage to your neck. If worn too loose it may also rub and can cause skin soreness and irritation.
 2. The collar should be kept on at **all** times unless you have received different instructions from your Consultant. It should be removed at least once daily for washing and checking your skin and exchanging the pads for clean ones.
 3. The Collar will only limit movement within your neck, not eliminate it completely. It is important that you monitor your posture to prevent slouching, and avoid any heavy lifting and carrying.
 4. The pads within the collar are removable and can be hand washed. They should be fully dry prior to wearing them and the collar should not be worn without them.
 5. Bathing and showering is not permitted unless you are given special instruction from your consultant.
- If you feel you may need guidance with washing and dressing technique please discuss this with the Occupational Therapist on the ward prior to discharge.

Who to contact if I have questions/concerns

If you have any questions or concerns with your brace, please contact the ward you were discharged from:

Ward..... Phone number

or your trauma rehabilitation co-ordinator on:

07393 016245 (Mon-Fri 8-4pm)