



A guide to...

Cervical Collars

How to fit and wear your neck collar

Patient Information

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 **SITTING**

You will need person/s to assist in this.

Head hold required? Yes / No

Please note the following

- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 (Monday-Friday, 8-4 pm)

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To replace when sitting

1. Place the back panel behind the neck; make sure it is centred evenly.



2. Pick up the front panel of the collar. Position the chin piece directly under the chin.



To remove when sitting

1. Sit up straight in a firm chair. Keep your head and neck still. If you have been advised to have a head hold; have someone stand behind you and hold both sides of your head. Do not bend your neck forward, backward or sideways. Be very careful not to move your neck while this is done.



3. Alternately tighten the straps, one at a time, until they are in the original position.



When the Vista Cervical Collar is properly re-applied, your chin will be centered in the chin piece, with the chin flush to the front of the plastic. The sides and the back panel will overlap the sides of the front piece. No plastic should touch any part of your skin.

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

Fold the pads in half then centre the pad in the shell.

1. Attach each pad in the same way.
2. Adjust pads as needed to make sure no plastic touches the skin.



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