

Neck Pain

Neck pain can arise due to injury, a muscular problem or a nerve irritation. The pain can range from a mild discomfort to severe, burning pain.

The pain is generally located locally around the neck area – either on one side or both. It can sometimes radiate down to the shoulder or shoulder blades. Occasionally it can travel further down one arm and may even cause pins and needles in the fingers.



Acute neck pain starts suddenly – often due to irritation of the facet joints (little joints at each side of the neck).

Chronic neck pain is pain that lasts over 3 months.

What causes neck pain?

Any number of incidents can cause neck pain, including:

- Degeneration “wear and tear” of the vertebrae in the spine
- Worry and stress
- Sleeping in an awkward position
- Prolonged and improper use of a workstation
- Motor vehicle accident
- Contact sports

Neck pain is rarely due to a serious disease, even when very severe, and you can still recover quickly. Most neck pain originates from the muscles, ligaments and joints in the spine. The spine is extremely strong and very difficult to damage. In most people x-rays are not particularly helpful. They often show the normal changes that come with age – unfortunately a bit like getting grey hair!

What can I do to help my neck pain?

- Move your neck rather than rest it
- Do regular neck exercises (but do not roll your head)
- Speak to your GP or pharmacist about pain relief if required
- Use gentle heat (see heat vs. cold leaflet)
- Practice keeping good posture
- Take regular breaks from potentially aggravating and repetitive activities
- Reduce stress and tension
- Use a good, supportive pillow to maintain sleeping posture (your physiotherapist may suggest loaning one of foam pillows available at Roundwood Health Clinic).

Physiotherapy can be extremely beneficial in helping to manage neck pain. Treatments include manual treatments to help restore your neck movements and reduce pain. Your physiotherapist will provide you with advice on posture and a specific exercise programme.

Book an appointment today at Roundwood Health Clinic if you need any advice or treatment.

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and should not be used for the diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions. Roundwood Health Clinic has used all reasonable care in compiling the information but make no warranty as to its accuracy. Consult a doctor or other health care professional for diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions.