

# WHIPLASH NECK INJURIES



The neck is comprised of seven individual small bones collectively known as the cervical spine. The neck provides full support to the head, which contains twenty-two bones of its own and has an average weight of fourteen pounds.

The bones of the neck are arranged in a precise pattern and structure to support the head. A delicate curvature must be maintained at all times to allow a clear channel for the passage of the vital spinal cord which travels through the center of the neck bones.

The sudden jarring crack of whiplash may cause injury - from moderate to severe - to the intricate bones and muscles or the cervical spine. When the bones of the neck move out of normal position, it causes a restriction in the opening between them, where the nerve and blood vessels are passing through. This may result in an irritation to the nerves and interference with nerve transmission and blood supply vital to body function. This so-called "pinching of nerves" may cause reduced function. Depending on severity, complete dysfunction of the area of the body governed by the impulses may lose function because of the injured nerve.

If the whiplash causes constriction of the blood supply to any area of the body, a variety of problems may result. Indeed, pinched nerves and/or constricted blood supply may masquerade as any number of illnesses. The organ affected signals its distress by a pattern of symptoms.

Compounding the possibility of severe whiplash injury is the automobile accident that occurs on icy roads, when the driver is already tense. The accident that happens as a result of driver fatigue and momentary inattention to the

road is also complex. Tension keeps muscles shortened, tightened, and highly susceptible to injury. Fatigue and the resultant slackening of muscle tone also lead to heightened possibility of injury.

Doctors of chiropractic specialize in the evaluation and nonsurgical, drug free treatment of structural imbalances in the body. Special emphasis is put on the spine and its effects of the nervous system.



## EARLY DETECTION OF WHIPLASH NECK INJURIES

1. Are you experiencing headaches, head and neck pains, stiff neck, or muscle spasms?
2. Do you have restricted head motion?
3. Do you have equilibrium problems, loss of hearing, or ringing in the ears?
4. Are you experiencing eye strain, or increased sensitivity to light?
5. Have you felt light-headed, excessively tired, or blacked out?
6. Have you had any neuralgia (nerve pain) or neuritis (nerve inflammation)?
7. Do you have cold hands or feet, or numbness of arms, hands, shoulders, feet, or legs?
8. Are you experiencing periods of unexplained depression, anxiety, or irritability?
9. Are you unable to concentrate, or do you have poor memory?
10. Do you have pains between the shoulders, low back pains, tremors, or rapid heartbeat?

If your answer to any of these questions is YES, you may be suffering from a misalignment or dislocation due to whiplash. Your doctor of chiropractic is qualified to assess your problem following tests and examination.