



University Hospital Galway

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
GalwayEM.ie

Neck Pain - Atraumatic

(<https://galwayem.ie/index.php/index.php/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal/neck-pain-atraumatic>)

Category

[Trauma and Musculoskeletal \(https://galwayem.ie/index.php/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal\)](https://galwayem.ie/index.php/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal)

Acute Torticollis

Patient usually awakes with acute neck pain with neck flexed and rotated.

- If possible straighten neck with gentle traction. Ethyl chloride spray may reduce muscle spasm.
- Soft collar for maximum of 48 hours, analgesia.
- Many benefit from physiotherapy.

Acute neck pain with or without root symptoms/signs

These patients should have a full neurological examination of the upper limbs.

- Discuss patients who have hard neurological signs with ED Senior re MRI. If out of hours bring patient back to early Review Clinic
 - Analgesia; NSAIDs and/or paracetamol with codeine (eg co-codamol 500/30) are the mainstay of treatment
 - May benefit from Physiotherapy
 - Many of these patients have long standing symptoms and in the absence of new hard neurological findings should be referred back to their GP
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