

## Managing Neck Pain



### Overview

If you're dealing with neck pain, you know how frustrating it can be. Fortunately, you can try these simple strategies for managing neck pain.

### Pain relief

First, try over-the-counter pain relievers. Aspirin, ibuprofen and acetaminophen can all be effective. So use whichever is right for you. You may want to apply ice and heat to your neck, too. Try using an ice pack for the first two or three days you're in pain, and then switch to heat. You can use a heating pad or a warm shower. Neck massages can help, too. You may want to sleep on a firmer mattress and use a more supportive pillow. And, your doctor may recommend that you wear a soft neck collar.

### Activity changes

In the days after a neck injury, you'll want to stop your regular physical activity. And then, for the next two or three weeks, avoid doing things that stress your neck. Activities like jogging, racquet sports, weightlifting and golf can all interfere with healing. Once your neck has had some time to heal, your doctor may recommend physical therapy to help stretch and strengthen your neck.

### Conclusion

If you take an active role in your care and follow your doctor's advice, you can manage neck pain successfully.