

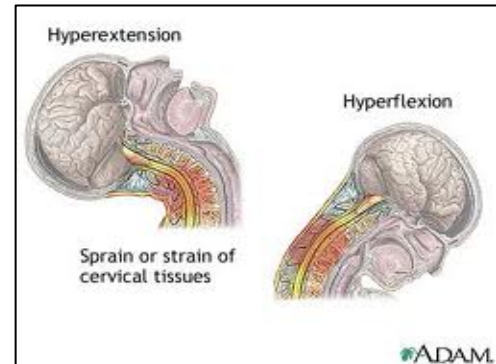


WHIPLASH INJURY



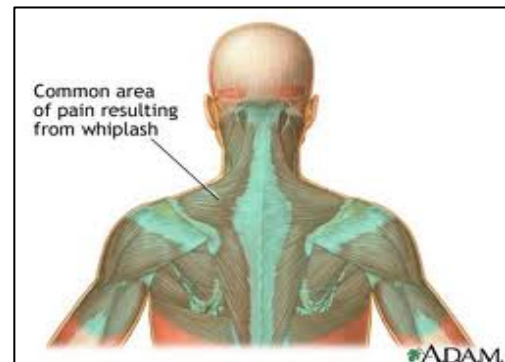
What is a whiplash injury?

A whiplash injury is a non-medical term used to describe the neck, shoulder, and possibly back pain that occurs after an abnormal motion or force that causes the body to move beyond the normal range of motion. A quick and forceful flexion-extension motion of the body that pulls and strains the muscles, tendons, and ligaments usually causes it. It is commonly associated with motor vehicle accidents, but can occur with falls, sports injuries, and injury to the head.



Where does it occur?

A whiplash injury typically occurs in the soft tissues of the neck, shoulders, and back. Pain is localized to the muscles, tendons, and ligaments.



What are possible signs and symptoms?

Symptoms are different with each individual but typically include:

- Pain, aching, tenderness in neck, shoulders and back
- Muscle spasms
- Difficulty moving head
- Sensory disturbance (such as pins and needles) to the arms & legs
- Headaches and sleep disturbances

How does physical therapy treat it?

- Protect, rest, ice – cervical collar may be needed
- ROM – passive, active
- Gradual stretching and strengthening
- Stabilization and postural awareness
- Manual therapy – massage, mobilization, stretch
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

