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Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net. This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 2789.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Neck injury

Emergency Department

King's Mill Hospital

Mansfield Road

Sutton in Ashfield

Notts NG17 4JL

Telephone: 01623 622515, extension 2789

Newark Hospital

Boundary Road

Newark

Notts NG24 4DE

Telephone: 01636 681681

A neck injury and subsequent pain can occur when a sudden movement or jolt to the body or head causes strain to the joints, ligaments, tendons, nerves and muscles in the neck and back.

Commonly seen after road traffic collisions, lifting, coughing, tripping etc. More commonly it can occur with postural stresses, such as prolonged sitting, for example at a computer, change of activity such as moving house or taking up a new hobby.

You may experience a wide variety of symptoms. Pain is the most common symptom (often referring pain into the shoulder, arm or hand) but can include pins and needles, headaches, dizziness, nausea, problems with concentration and memory, ringing in your ears and deafness.

In most cases these symptoms are temporary and will resolve naturally. It is important to understand that the pain is not harmful, it is usually short lived, and it is controllable. The symptoms often increase in the few days after an accident due to swelling in the tissues. This is a normal part of the healing process.

It may take up to six weeks for full recovery. Evidence shows that the most important factor in your recovery is an early return to normal activities.

Avoid

Long periods of rest / inactivity / soft collars and muscle relaxant tablets.

Exercises and positioning

Resting for a few minutes with a roll under your neck, such as a rolled-up magazine or rolling pin covered with a soft towel placed under your neck, can reduce pain.

For headaches, the roll is best placed high in the neck, at the base of the skull, and for shoulder and arm pain, lower down the neck, wherever best pain relief is gained. You may experience your arm pain easing and 'centralising' up towards the neck.

Try not to sleep with more than two pillows under your head.

See your GP or return to the Emergency Department immediately if you develop:

- Changes in function or loss of control of bladder or bowels.
- Pins and needles in BOTH arms or BOTH legs at the same time
- Numbness in the back passage or genital area.
- Marked weakness of the limbs / balance problems or sexual dysfunction.