

# *Orthopaedic Connection*

## **Whiplash**

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### *Transforming patient information into patient understanding.*

Whiplash is a term that personal injury attorneys are very familiar with. Orthopaedic Surgeons are very familiar with whiplash also, but I don't make a home visit to discuss it with you like personal injury attorneys advertise. In my work an office visit is more the norm.

### **What Is It, Really?**

If your vehicle is rear ended, your vehicle is shoved forward. In a split second your head and shoulders are moving forward also.

If you step on the brake to stop the vehicle suddenly, your head and neck are thrown backward. This sudden jerking back and forth results in a painful neck injury called whiplash.

20% of people involved in rear end collisions experience whiplash symptoms. While most people recover quickly, some develop chronic symptoms.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

Within 2 days of the accident you may experience some of the following:

- Neck pain and stiffness
- Headaches
- Shoulder and/or neck pain
- Lower back pain
- Pain and numbness in the arm and/or hand
- Dizziness
- Ringing of the ears
- Blurred vision
- Irritability
- Sleepless, fatigue
- Can't concentrate or remember

### **Your Treatment**

If the pain is mild and you don't have any severe symptoms:

- Ibuprofen
- Ice to neck for twenty minutes 2 – 3 times per day
- Gentle movement
- Walking

### **Doctor Treatment**

If pain is more severe or doesn't subside seek treatment. Call too if you experience weakness or numbness in the arms or legs. Dizziness, blurred vision, ringing in the ears must be checked.

You certainly will need at the least a thorough examination and plain x-rays. MRI maybe, but not always.

- Rest neck with a soft collar
- Physical therapy
- Massage
- Heat and Ice
- Ibuprofen
- Cervical pillow to sleep

Most whiplash symptoms subside in 6 – 12 months. Chronic symptoms occasionally may need surgery.

*Prevention: Properly adjusted head rest and always wear your seat belt.*

*My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.*

### **Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive**

Wow! Your window to the Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal world opens at [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). It contains the Website Library of information, Your Orthopaedic Connection and GCH archive of all previous articles.

You will be amazed at all the helpful information it contains.

All of the information pertains to everything I treat in the office and hospital.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush