

Torticollis – Wry Neck

What is Torticollis?

Torticollis means torus- 'twisted' and collum- 'neck'. The condition is usually a protective splinting behavior to protect an inflamed and restricted facet joint in the neck. This initiates a vicious cycle of pain, inflammation, spasm, and even a greater amount of loss of motion in the neck. Etiology is unknown, however, association with hypermobility syndrome, migraine, connective tissue disorder, past trauma to facet joints, and chronic neck pain is worth noting. Four general forms of Torticollis are described in the literature. The forms are congenital, acquired, spasmodic, and acute. Our chiropractic experts will determine and discuss your form of torticollis with you.

Symptoms

Presenting symptoms include a painful, fixed position and behavior of the cervical spine with lateral flexion and contralateral rotation away from the affected side. Movement increases pain and can be debilitating in nature. Spasms of the trapezius, SCM, and levator are typically always present.

Diagnosis

Clinical diagnosis is made through a neuromusculoskeletal examination and further confirmed through diagnostic imaging and response to the initial clinical trial of care.

Orthos: Unilateral pain, spasm, and significant loss of ROM. Extension, ipsilateral lateral bend, and ipsilateral rotation toward pain increase symptoms dramatically. increased Lateral Foraminal Compression Test and Severe decreased cervical AROM and PROM, the patient is without or has minimal radicular symptoms, negative for disc involvement, negative for nerve root impingement or radicular symptoms, negative for neuromeningeal tension, patient denies all 5 Ds and 3 N's.

Radiographs may be unnecessary unless indications with case history, past trauma, or the presence of any 'red flags'.

Prognosis

- Improvement is unpredictable and quick improvements are not uncommon, however slow improvement is usually the normal progression for anecdotal care. Depending on the type of torticollis you have our chiropractic physicians will prescribe an individualized treatment plan with the goal of restoring function and reducing pain as quickly as possible.
- Chronic pain and deconditioning of the spine will delay progress
- Genetic factors such as hypermobility syndrome need to be addressed and treated for long-term benefit and health of the spine.

Treatment

Chiropractic Care for Cervical and Thoracic spine

Chiropractic Care for Upper Extremity Scapula

Soft Tissue Mobilization

Cervical Decompression with Cox Technic

Isometric Stretching

Zymain and Salizan until pain resolutions

Magnesium 300mg daily

Plan of Care

Daily until 50% restoration of AROM, followed by 2-3x/ week for 4 weeks, ending with 1x/week until symptoms are resolved completely. Maintenance care is necessary for best outcomes on what form of torticollis is present and if any chronic, degenerative, deconditions, or hypermobility is present.

Other Options

Cervical Collar

Massage Therapy

Trigger point injections

Antispasmodics

Over the counter -NSAIDS