



## ***Acceleration Injuries Acute Injury Self Care Instructions, WAD II and III***

From the time of impact and up to 4 weeks

*“Injuries DO heal, and it’s all about you taking control.”*

- Be as active as you possibly can within reason. Rest is only recommended in the first 4 days after an accident, but prolonged rest can be detrimental to your recovery. Research shows that the more you move-provided it’s gentle, little, and often-the better the results.
- For a period of time, refrain from yoga, weight lifting, and Pilates. The amount of time to refrain from these activities can vary based the severity of your injuries.
- Limit sitting to about 20-30 minutes at a time, especially if you perform a great deal of computer work. Prolonged sitting will increase your pain level. Use arm supports or pillows when sitting. This helps unload the neck muscles and joints and can make sitting more comfortable at work and home.
- Protect your neck at night with appropriate support while on your back or on your side. Avoid all stomach sleeping, even if it was a comfortable position prior to your accident.
- Moving your neck comfortably is appropriate, but refrain from vigorous neck stretching. This includes avoiding thrust manipulation.
- Aerobic Exercise: At least 20 minutes of light walking or stationary bike 2-3 days per week.
- Pain level can vary during the day and can increase in stressful situations and environments. This does not mean your neck is getting worse.
- Take your medications as instructed by your MD. Medications generally help you to be able to move with less pain. Your pain should be controllable and suffering with excruciating pain is not an expectation.
- Limit and control the intensity of your pain by appropriate self-management.
- Use ice or cold packs for no more than 20 minutes at a time. Moist heat has the potential to increase pain in some patients, but you may use heat if it manages your pain better.
- Avoid any heavy lifting and you should generally limit lifting to about 10 pounds.
- Engage in frequent and short rest periods for your neck. This can include lying in the supine position for 5 minutes.
- You may start physical therapy at 4 weeks after the accident, but one visit after the accident to help you through the acute phase of your injury may be useful.

If you have any questions, you can contact **Metropolitan Physical Therapy** at 303.604-2600 for additional information about how to manage your Whiplash.