



What is it?

Cervical spondylosis is a cause of neck pain. It tends to develop after the age of 30, and becomes more common with increasing age. The underlying cause is the age-related degeneration ('wear & tear' or osteoarthritis) of the vertebrae and discs in the neck region.

To an extent, we all develop some degeneration in the vertebrae and discs as we become older. However, cervical spondylosis is a term used if the degree of degeneration is more severe, and causes more symptoms, than is expected for a given age.

Symptoms

Symptoms can vary from mild to severe and may include:

- Pain in the neck. This may spread to the base of the skull and shoulders. Movement of the neck may make the pain worse. The pain sometimes spreads down an arm to a hand or fingers. The pain tends to wax and wane with flare-ups from time to time. However, some people develop chronic (persistent) pain.
- Some neck stiffness, particularly after a night's rest.
- Headaches from time to time. The headaches often start at the back of the head just above the neck and travel over the top to the forehead.
- Numbness, pins and needles or weakness may occur in part of the arm or hand. Tell a doctor if these symptoms occur as they may indicate a problem with a 'trapped nerve'.

What should you do?

Exercise your neck and keep active. Aim to keep your neck moving as normally as possible. As far as possible, continue with normal activities. In the past, some people have worn a neck collar for long periods when a flare-up of neck pain developed. It is now known that if you wear a collar for long periods it may cause the neck to 'stiffen up'. Therefore, try to keep your neck as active as possible.

- Painkillers are often helpful. You need only take them when symptoms flare-up and you should seek advice from your pharmacist or GP for appropriate advice.
- Anti-inflammatory painkillers (caution should be taken with these medications as they can cause abdominal side effects). As stated above any medication that you take should be discussed with your GP or pharmacist.
- A good posture may help. Try not to stoop when you sit at a desk. Sit upright.
- A firm supporting pillow seems to help some people when sleeping.
- The evidence that physical, like massage, treatments help is not strong. While some of these sorts of treatments may give some short term relief, what may be most helpful is the advice a physiotherapist can give on neck exercises to do at home.

Do I need an X-ray?

Your GP or physiotherapist will be able to advise you whether you will require an x-ray. X-rays are only an adjunct to diagnosing Cervical Spondylosis and are not always necessary in treating it appropriately.

Contact us now

☎ 020 8778 9050

📠 020 8659 1501

✉ enquiries@cpgg.co.uk

🌐 www.cpgg.co.uk