



Want to know a little more?

Wry Neck

The facet joints are the small joints on either side of the spine which connect between the vertebra. Within the facet joint there is a small cartilage (flat oval disc of cartilage) which helps smooth movement of the joint when you move your neck. A wry neck occurs when this cartilage is pinched. The joint then becomes inflamed and swollen, restricting movement. A wry neck is characterised by acute pain, often with muscle spasm which greatly limits your neck movements.



A wry neck may not necessarily occur as a result of a particular incident, sometimes you may simply wake up with a stiff neck or you sleep “the wrong way”. Sometimes a fast movement may lead to the irritation, or strenuous activity in the days leading up to the injury may contribute.

Physiotherapy management of an acute wry neck initially involves reducing the inflammatory response and reducing muscle spasm. This reduces the acute pain and then allows joint mobilisations and muscular massage to regain movement at the involved joint and in the surrounding structures.

Disclaimer: The information on this page is intended as a guide only, and does not constitute advice or treatment. For further information, please see your qualified physiotherapist

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