Neck Pain, Disc and Whiplash

As a nation our lifestyles are tending to become more sedentary. We may spend long periods of time sitting, working at computers or performing repetitive tasks. Fatigue and stress can compound the problem. These can all increase the strain placed on our muscles, spinal column and ultimately the discs and nerves. Fatigue, stress and poor posture can compound the problem and start to cause pain, such as neck pain or headaches.

The bones of your spine protect your spinal cord; loss of normal motion or position of these bones can irritate the nerve roots that exit from the spine to go to organs and tissues of the body. Flexibility of the spine is achieved through discs and ligaments between the vertebrae. A disc is made up from a central softer core and surrounded by outer rings of tough cartilage.

The disc allows shock absorption and movement. A ‘slipped disc’ is an inaccurate term used to describe the damage to the outer rings of cartilage allowing the softer core to squeeze outwards. This can eventually lead to a bulge, which can press on or cause chemical irritation to the nerve, nerve root or spinal cord itself. A disc bulge (prolapse) can cause excruciating pain. In the neck this problem may manifest itself as arm pain, pins and needles or numbness. If a pain like this has not improved after several days or if it keeps occurring in the same area, then a visit to your Chiropractor or GP is advisable.

Falls and blows to the head or neck can result in neck injury. Chiropractors will often see patients who are suffering neck pain following a motor vehicle accident. Whiplash is a term used to describe a rapid acceleration or deceleration of the body, which injures the mid-neck area. Many people who have suffered these injuries may still have significant pain for months after the injury, and others may suffer intermittent pain for years afterwards.

Following an accident you are likely to have been examined by the hospital or your GP who can check for fracture or dislocation. Although they may find no serious injury, you may still be suffering with neck pain, arm pain or pins and needles/numbness of the arms. These pains may be due to irritation of the nerves, or restriction of joints and surrounding muscular tightness. Chiropractors are trained to assess the joints, muscles and nerves to find the cause of your problem. Chiropractic adjustments can help to improve joint mobility, relax areas of muscle tightness and ultimately remove the irritation around the spinal nerves/nerve roots.

Through the use of a good history, orthopaedic and neurological examination, Chiropractors identify the specific cause of your pain. They can determine whether Chiropractic care is a viable option for you or whether you should be referred for further medical assessment. Should they decide that Chiropractic care is suitable for you, and you are happy with this option, your Chiropractor may adjust your relevant vertebra(e) and address any muscular problems to help improve spinal motion and reduce irritation to the disc or nerve. Neck pain and associated conditions are something that our Chiropractors see every day, they are usually successful in treating such conditions. If your problem does fail to improve with Chiropractic care or if we believe that you would benefit from seeing another healthcare provider then we will gladly refer you to your GP.