

End Your Headaches And Neck Pain

COMMON NECK CONDITIONS

- Migraines and Headaches
- Neck Pain
- Poor Posture
- Herniated disc and neck pain
- Radiating shoulder and arm pain
- Numbness and Tingling
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Stiff neck and limited movement
- Neck injury from car accident / whiplash

Why Does Your Neck Hurt?

Do you find yourself not being able to turn your head and neck like you use to? Do you find that your neck is very tense and hard to relax? Do you sometimes have neck pain, dizziness, ear pain, or headaches? Have you been in an auto accident that resulted in neck injury?

The neck is made up of 7 small vertebrae, intervertebral discs to absorb shock, joints, the spinal cord, nerve roots, muscles and ligaments. Because of the large amount of motion in the neck and the weight of the head, this area is more vulnerable to injury. Injury to any of these structures can cause neck pain.



Causes of Neck Pain

There is an extensive list of possible causes of neck (cervical) pain. Some of the most common are:

- Motor Vehicle Accidents (MVA): Whiplash (muscle and ligament damage).
- Degenerative Disorders: wear and tear with aging.
 - Spinal Stenosis: Narrowing of the canals that the spinal cord and nerve roots travel through causes inflammation.
 - Degenerative Joint Disease (Osteoarthritis): bone spurs form.
- Spondylolisthesis: slipping of one vertebrae on another
- Herniated Disc
- Poor Posture / Weak Abdominal Muscles

Symptoms

Symptoms of cervical pain will vary depending on the actual cause of the pain, but may include:

- Muscle discomfort in the neck, upper back or shoulders.
- Difficulty turn or bending neck.
- Pain that travels down into the shoulder or arm.
- Numbness or tingling in the arm, hand or fingers.
- Muscle weakness in arm, decreased grip strength.

Diagnosis

To determine the cause of an individual's neck pain, the doctor will rely on the following:

- Detailed medical history
- Physical Examination
- X-rays
- MRI (if more detailed exam is necessary)

Headaches?

Whether you suffer headaches from chronic tension or acute whiplash injury, intervertebral disc disease or progressive arthritis, the neck can be a hidden and severely debilitating source of headaches.

Cervicogenic Headaches Is your neck the cause?

What are Cervicogenic Headaches?

Head pain that is referred from the bony structures or soft tissues of the neck is commonly called “cervicogenic headache.” This is a medical term that means “a pain in the neck” that causes headache, indicating that the primary contributing structural source of the

headache is the cervical spine. Neck pain and headaches quite often are related. It is often a sequela of head or neck injury but may also occur in the absence of trauma. The clinical features of cervicogenic headache may mimic those commonly associated with primary headache disorders such as tension-type headache, migraine, and as a result, distinguishing among these headache types can be difficult. There are well mapped out patterns of headaches relating to a multiplicity of muscular trigger points in the neck and shoulder-blade region, as well as to disc and joint levels in the upper cervical spine.

How Do I Know I Have a Cervicogenic Headache?

A cervicogenic headache has very specific diagnostic criteria that differentiate it from other forms of headaches. These include:

- Pain in the upper neck – especially to the touch
- Medication has no or little effect to alleviate the pain
- A one-sided headache without change (infrequently both sides)



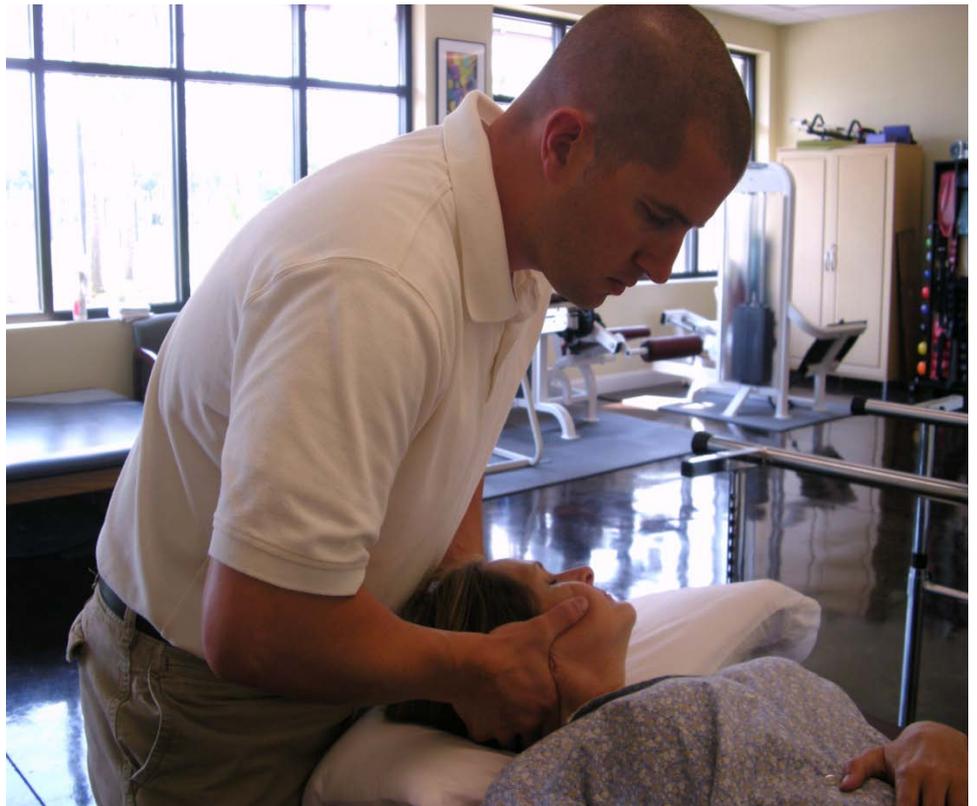
- The headache starts in the upper neck, can be felt in the back, side and front of the head. Shoulder and arm pain are possible.
- Moderate to severe pain, usually starting in the neck
- Headaches increase with neck movement or awkward neck positions
- Restricted neck movements
- Headaches are more common in females but also present in males.

How can we help eliminate your Neck Pain and Headaches?

Neck Pain Treatment

Your neck pain and symptoms are extensively evaluated by our expert Manual Therapists and Board Certified Orthopaedic physical therapists who have years of training in medical evaluation of musculoskeletal conditions.

At PRS, our physical therapists spend years of training in how to examine how your muscles, bones, and joints move. When there is improper movement, your physical therapist is trained to pinpoint the source of this incorrect movement and weakness



A physical therapist will evaluate your symptoms and help determine the cause of pain. A treatment plan is then made up to address these limitations with specialized manual therapy to relieve sore muscles, help joints move again, to gently stretch tight tissues. Your therapists will work with you to develop a specific plan of gentle exercises that will gradually strengthen your neck and shoulder muscles so that your neck is supported.

Goals of physical therapy are to decrease pain and improve function. Actual treatment will vary depending on the reason for the pain, but may include some of the following:

- *Modalities* such as ultrasound, electrical stimulation, or cervical traction to help with muscle relaxation and decrease pressure on the nerve roots.
- *Joint and Soft Tissue Mobilization*.
- *Exercises* to help improve posture, stretch tight muscles, strengthen weak muscles.
- *Body mechanics* to help decrease continued and addition strain on the neck.

Cervicogenic Headache Treatment

Physical therapy can be very helpful for headaches that originate in the muscles or joints of the neck. Your treatments should be provided by an expert spine therapist that has advanced clinical knowledge and specialized training in the treatment of cervicogenic headaches. Their unique expertise relieves your pain and even can reduce the incidence of cervicogenic headaches. This “evidence-based” approach focuses on joint mobilization of the upper cervical area and is critical to treatment success in anyone with chronic or recurrent headaches.

Treatment requires a thorough evaluation of the possible contributing factors, several of which often exist together. Therapy includes a combination of joint mobility, soft tissue massage, muscle strengthening, and improving endurance to reduce headache frequency. Manual therapy will be used to realign and relieve pressure that causes the headaches.

Free Consultation

Call for a [Free 15 Minute Consultation](#) with a Physical Therapist to see if we can help you with your pain today!

Download our Referral for your care

Download our referral and let your physician know we are **your choice** forgetting you “pain free”.

- [Physical Therapy Referral](#)

