

Major Trauma Service



Collar care: meeting hygiene needs and skin checks for a patient who requires assistance to move.

Introduction

Rigid neck collars are used to restrict neck movement and protect structures in the neck while they heal following injury. Your medical team will have explained the particular injury you have and their plan for managing this. Part of the plan requires you to wear your collar constantly for a period of weeks and it is important your skin is cleaned and checked on a daily basis. You will require at least one person to assist you and the process will have been demonstrated to them by the ward team prior to your discharge.

It is important the collar is fitted snugly, with your chin correctly in the chin rest otherwise it is likely to cause pressure and damage to your skin.

If during the cleaning process your assistant notices a broken area of skin or a persistent reddened area you must continue wearing the collar but will need to get this reviewed as soon as possible by your GP/ practise nurse. Please take these instructions so they know how to remove the collar correctly.

For any issues with the structure of your collar or if you need it replaced please contact the Surgical Appliances Dept at UHCW NHS Trust on 024 76 96 6035.



Skin cleaning process

Front of neck

1. The patient is assisted to lie on their back on the bed with one thin pillow under their head.
2. The patient focuses their eyes on a point on the ceiling and keeps their head still while the assistant releases the two velcro straps and removes the front section of the collar.
3. The assistant wipes clean and dries the front of the neck and checks skin for areas of redness/ broken skin.
4. The front section is replaced and the velcro re-attached with the collar fitting snugly.

Right side and back of neck

1. The patient is assisted to roll on to their left side with their head supported on one thin pillow.
2. The patient keeps their head still and holds the front section of the collar in place under the chin section while the assistant releases the uppermost Velcro strap.
3. The assistant pulls back the top of the back section of the collar and cleans, dries and checks the skin as before.
4. The assistant re-attaches the top velcro strap firmly and the patient is assisted to return to lying on their back.

Left side and back of neck

1. The patient is assisted to roll on to their right side with their head supported on one thin pillow.
2. The patient keeps their head still and holds the front section of the collar in place under the chin section while the assistant releases the uppermost Velcro strap.
3. The assistant pulls back the top of the back section of the collar and cleans, dries and checks the skin as before.
4. The assistant re-attaches the top Velcro strap firmly and the patient is assisted to lie on their back.

Patient Information

***A short animation to support these instructions can be found on:
You tube – search; NHSUHCW and look for ‘Skin care when wearing a
hard collar’.***

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 76 96 6051 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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