

## Major Trauma Service



# Collar care: Meeting hygiene needs and skin checks for a patient who is independently mobile and able to follow instruction.

## 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 injury you have and their plan for managing this. Part of the plan requires you to wear your collar for several weeks and it is important your skin is cleaned and checked daily. You will need one person to assist you and the process will have been demonstrated to them by the ward team before 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 with you 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 department at on 024 76 96 6035.



## Patient Information

### Process

#### Front of neck

1. Patient lies on their back on the bed with one thin pillow under head.
2. Patient focuses eyes on a point on the ceiling and keeps head still while their assistant releases the two Velcro straps and removes the front section of the collar.
3. Assistant wipes clean and dries the front of the neck and checks skin for areas of redness/ broken skin.
4. Front section is replaced and Velcro reattached with collar fitting snugly.

#### Right side and back of neck

1. Patient rolls on to their left side with their head supported on one thin pillow.
2. Patient keeps 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 returns to lying on their back.

#### Left side and back of neck

1. Patient rolls on to their right side with their head supported on one thin pillow.
2. Patient keeps 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 returns to lying on their back.

## Patient Information

**A short animation to support these instructions can be found on: Youtube – 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 7696 6051 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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Field Code Changed

#### Document History

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