

## Head / Neck / Spine Injuries

### Signs & Symptoms

#### For a Severe Injury

- The scalp, neck, or back bleeds.
- It looks like the head, neck, or back is in an odd position.
- Pain is felt in the back, neck, and/or head. The pain can be severe.
- Stiff neck.
- Abdominal pain. Vomiting.
- Blood or fluid comes from the mouth, nose, or an ear.

#### Keep the head, neck, and back perfectly still.

- Loss of vision. Blurred or double vision. Pupils are not the same size.
- Inability to move any part of the body. Weakness in an arm or leg. Walking is difficult.
- New feelings of numbness occur in the legs, arms, shoulders, or any other part of the body.
- New loss of bladder or bowel control occurs.
- Confusion. Drowsiness. Personality changes.
- Convulsions.
- Loss of consciousness.

Watch for signs and symptoms for the first 24 hours after the injury. Symptoms may not occur for as long as several weeks, though.

#### For a Whiplash Injury

- Neck pain and stiffness.
- Having a hard time raising the head off of a pillow.

#### Causes

Anything that puts too much pressure or force on the head, neck, or back can result in injury. Common causes are falls, accidents, and hard blows.

#### Treatment

If you suspect a head, neck, or back injury, you must keep the head, neck, and back perfectly still until emergency medical care arrives. Any movement of the head, neck, or back could result in paralysis or death.