

# Dr. Colin Gage

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*"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"*

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## Info on Whiplash

Injuries to the neck caused by a sudden movement of the head, backward, forward, or sideways, is referred to as whiplash. Whether from a car accident, sports, or an accident at work, whiplash or other neck injuries warrant a thorough chiropractic check-up. The biggest danger with whiplash injuries is that the symptoms can take years to develop. Too often people don't seek treatment until more serious complications develop. Even after whiplash victims settle their insurance claims, some 45% report they still suffer with symptoms two years later.

In the past a typical whiplash injury, where no bones were broken, was hard to document. Soft tissue injury didn't show up on normal x-rays/radiographs and insurance companies would deny coverage. Literally adding insult to injury, the patient suffering all too real pain was sometimes considered to be a fraud, a liar, or at best a hypochondriac. Today's imaging devices (CAT Scans, Magnetic Imaging, and Ultra Sound) now show soft tissue injuries with much greater detail.

Whenever someone has a whiplash injury, there are typical symptoms that one may experience. When no bones are broken and the head doesn't strike the windshield, these symptoms are as follows:

- 62% to 98% complain of neck pain, which typically starts two hours up to two days after the accident. This is often the result of tightened muscles that react to either muscle tears or joint sprains.
- 66% to 70% of those suffering from whiplash complain of headache. The pain may be on one side or both, on again off again or constant, in one spot or more general. These headaches, like the neck pain, are often the result of strained, tense muscles trying to keep the sprained cervical joints of the neck stable. The pain of these headaches are often felt at the back of the head, forehead, temples, and behind the eyes.
- Shoulder pain often described as pain radiating down the back of the neck into the shoulder blade area, may also be the result of tensed muscles.
- Muscle tears are often described as burning pain, prickling or tingling.
- A more severe injury, such as disc damage or herniation, may cause sharp pain with certain movements, with or without radiation into the arms, hand and fingers, which are relieved by holding your hand over your head.

The following is a list of other symptoms that one may feel after a whiplash injury:

- Blurred vision
- Difficulty swallowing
- Irritability
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Pain between the shoulder blades
- Low back pain and/or stiffness
- Nausea
- Ringing in the ears
- Vertigo
- Numbness and tingling
- Pain in the jaw or face

If you experience any of these symptoms, play it safe and get a chiropractic check up. To see a chiropractor in regards to any ICBC or WCB related injury, you do not need a referral from your medical doctor. Once a proper examination is performed and an accurate diagnosis is made, safe and conservative chiropractic treatment can commence.