

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

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Aspen Collar

A patient's guide



Introduction

Your doctor has determined that an Aspen collar will aid in your rehabilitation. The collar will maintain your neck in the proper position while it is healing. Limiting the motion of your neck is an important part of your treatment.

This pamphlet will explain what you need to know about wearing your collar. You can help the healing process by following the instructions laid out in this pamphlet.



1. Duration of application
2. Position to be applied and removed
3. How to apply and remove
4. Washing and Dressing
5. Skin care
6. Precautions
7. Collar Maintenance
8. Additional information

Additional Information

Additional instructions:

If you have any problems or questions about the use and care of your neck collar, get advice from the person that assists you with your collar management.

This may be:

- your doctor
- carer
- Therapist

If you experience any of the following, call your doctor:

- Severe back or neck pain
- Bruising and swelling on your neck or back
- Weakness, tingling, or loss of feeling in your arms or legs
- Loss of bowel or bladder function

Advice on when the Neck Collar needs to be applied

It has been advised that you are required to wear the Aspen collar for _____ weeks.

This duration may change at you fracture clinic follow up appointments. Ask your doctor at future appointments if there is a change to the amount of time you need to wear it.

What position do I need to apply and remove the collar?

Lying flat Sitting Standing

Do I need to be wearing it when I am lying down? Yes No

Can I roll in bed independently with the collar off? Yes No

Do I need to be wearing it when I am sitting down? Yes No

Do I need to be wearing it when standing? Yes No

Do I need to be wearing it when walking around? Yes No

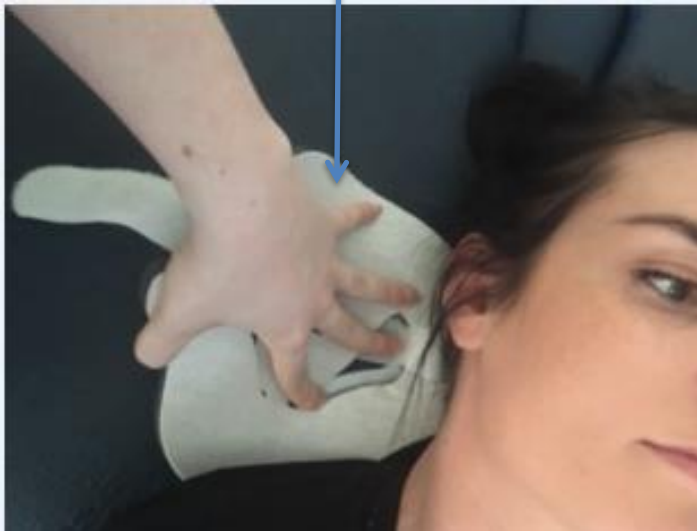
Do I need to be wearing it when I am having a wash? Yes No

Additional information:

Applying the Aspen Collar

- You will need a second person to help you in order to maintain the proper head, neck and airway alignment.
- You must be lying flat with your head in a neutral position.
- Take the back of the collar and slide it underneath the neck.
- Ensure the collar is the right way up – “Vista” wording on the Velcro straps should highlight this.
- Press down into the mattress so that the neck remains in a neutral position.
- Pull the straps through on each side to ensure that they are the same length.

Take the back of the collar
and slide it underneath the



Collar Maintenance

- Peel the old green / grey pads off.
- Look carefully at the shape as you remove them so you can reposition the clean pads properly.
- Wash the pads with soap and water. (Avoid using bleach or harsh detergents).
- Thoroughly rinse the pads with clean water and ring out the excess water.
- Lay the pads out flat to air dry. It should take around 60 minutes to dry.
- Wipe the white plastic collar shell clean with soap and water.
- Attach the replacement pads.
- Fold the pads in half with the green / grey side out next to the Velcro (the white side goes against the skin); then centre the pad in the green shell.
- Adjust pads as needed so that no plastic touches the skin.

Pads to be
removed and
cleaned



Precautions

Do not:

- bend your neck forward
- bend you neck back ward
- bend your neck from side to side
- Your collar will prevent you from doing this when it is on.

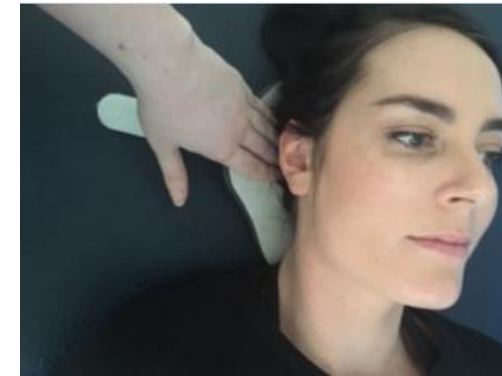
Do:

Keep your head and neck in a neutral position (nose in line with belly button, chin level).



NO moving
when collar
off!

Applying the Aspen Collar Continued...



- Place the front of the collar under the chin and curl the ends against the neck.
- Fasten the straps on each side – ensuring that they are symmetrical.
- Ensure the collar is a snug fit; you should not be able to slip your chin inside the collar.
- To adjust the height, use the rim around the yellow circle in front.
- Pull and turn the rim to a level that is comfortable for you.



Applying the Aspen Collar continued...



Tighten both
Velcro straps

To adjust
the height
underneath
the chin:

Pull the
green rim
out and
twist

- Adjust the straps as required for a snug fit when sitting.



Washing, Dressing & Skin Care Continued...

- Once this is complete, reattach the velcro strap.
- Lie on your back, remove both velcro straps and take the front part of the collar off.
- Check and wash the skin on the front of the neck, chin, collar bones and chest.
- Once complete, put the front of the collar back on.

- Observe for any redness or irritation under the collar, especially over bony areas like the chin, collar bones or the back of the head.
- Wearing a beard may cause skin irritation in men.
- Redness on chin may indicate improper use of a pillow.
- Pillows must always be placed behind the head and shoulders.
- Contact your GP or district nurse if you notice any sores occurring on the skin.

Washing, Dressing & Skin Care

Daily cleaning will help to prevent skin irritation.

It is best to have a routine on when you complete the washing and skin care.

Recommended would be when you have help from family or carers to complete this.

- Lie down on your side with the collar on.
- Place a small pillow / folded towel under the cheek to prevent the head from tilting sideways.
- Undo the velcro strap on the top side of the collar and fold the back down to check the skin wash the neck and completely dry it.



Applying the Aspen Collar Continued...

From the back



- Patient is now safe to mobilise out of bed at their safe level.

Removing the Aspen Collar

Only take the collar off when advised by the doctor. This can be for the following reasons:

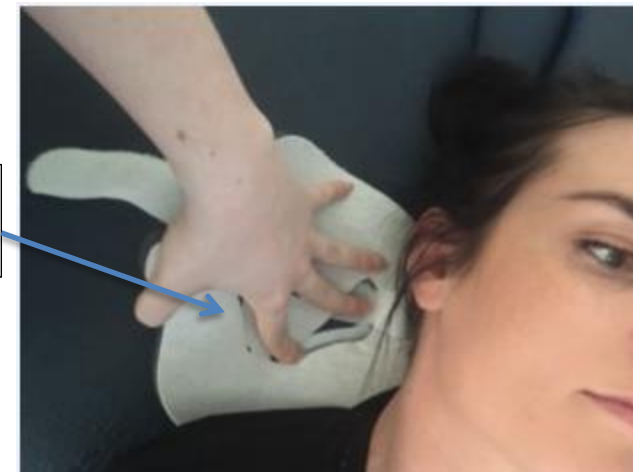
- Checking the skin underneath the collar
 - Washing the skin underneath the collar
 - Changing the collar pads and cleaning the collar
 - Duration of time required to wear it is completed
- You must be lying flat on your back when removing the collar.
 - Keep your head in a neutral position.
 - Undo the velcro straps on each side.
 - Take the front of the collar off. Check the skin / wash the neck / change the collar pads / wash the collar.



Open
Velcro
on both
sides and
remove
front

Removing the Aspen Collar Continued...

- Take the back of the collar and slide it underneath the neck to one side.
- You will have to press down into the mattress so that the neck remains in a neutral position.
- Change the collar pads / wash the collar.
- You will be unable to wash the neck or get a good inspection of the skin in this position.
- Please refer to the next section on how to check the skin / wash the back of the neck.



Slide the
back out

Do not bend your neck forward, back ward or side to side when your collar is off. Keep your head and neck in a neutral position (nose in line with belly button, chin level).