



SURGICAL SERVICES

PATIENT CARE GUIDE FOR MIAMI J COLLARS

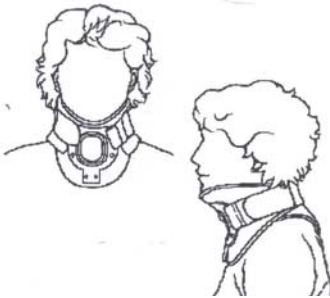
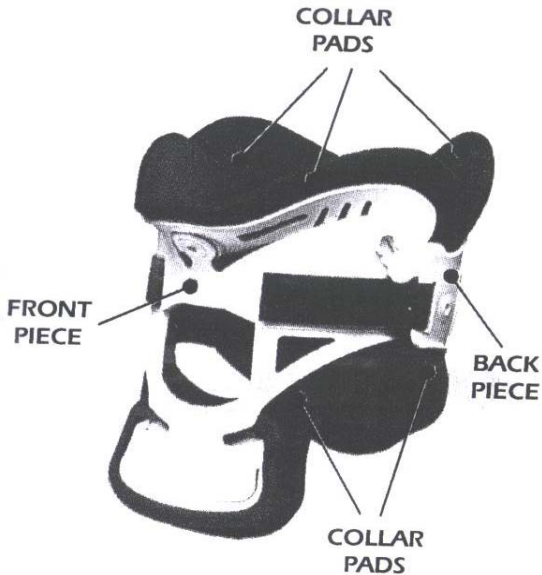


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Introduction

Your physician has determined that wearing a Miami J collar will aid in your rehabilitation. This collar is referred to as a “stiff collar” that has both front and back pieces that fasten together with Velcro. There are removable blue pads which line the collar. Its purpose is to keep your neck and spine straight and to help healing by supporting your neck bones. You may have been fitted before surgery for this collar. ***It must be worn at all times.***



This pamphlet has been designed to explain proper care as well as assist you in the healing process while you wear the Miami J collar.

Clothing

Dressing is not too much of a problem with these collars. Try to avoid wearing pullovers shirts and sweaters. You may choose to wear button up shirts.

Diet and Eating

If you have had surgery it is normal to have a sore throat and some difficulty swallowing solid foods. This may persist for several weeks. Eating soft foods like yogurt, macaroni and mashed potatoes seems to help. It may take some time getting use to eating with your head up straight. It may be necessary to have your food cut into smaller pieces.

Skin Care

You should keep your skin clean and dry. The skin should be checked for redness or open areas daily. Areas to pay close attention to are under the chin, the back of the head and on the shoulders where the collar rests.

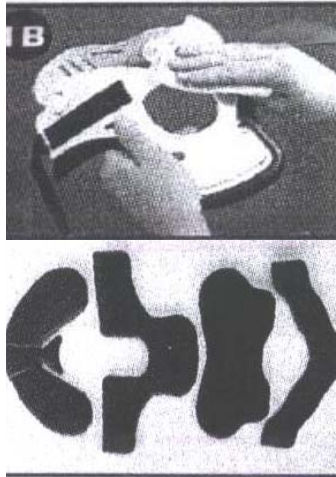
If you have had surgery, keep your incision dry. Do not use lotions, powders or oils. If skin irritation occurs, try wearing a silk scarf under your brace or the irritation may be due to improper fit of the collar.

Sleeping

You may sleep in any comfortable position as long as your collar is securely in place. It is not abnormal to have difficulty sleeping for the first little while. Many people find comfort sleeping in a recliner chair.

Collar Care

The collar has removable pads. Cleaning the collar will help to prevent skin irritation. For cleaning the collar, an extra set of blue replacement pads are required. Pads should be replaced if they become frayed or start to separate. Your collar should be cleaned everyday. A convenient time may be when you shower or have a bath.



Do not use bleach, dish detergent or harsh chemicals. The collar and pads should be hand washed with mild soap and water and rinsed thoroughly in clean water. The pads should be air dried on a flat surface. If the white plastic is dirty, it can also be wiped with mild soap and water.

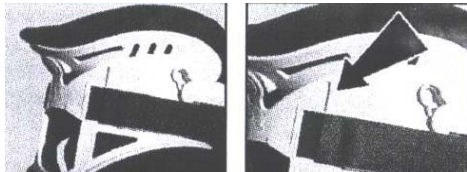
Collar Application

How to Apply:

You must be lying flat to remove the collar unless your physician gives you permission to do this in a sitting position. Someone should always help you remove and reapply your collar in order to maintain proper head, neck and airway alignment. You need to concentrate on keeping your head and neck still.

The collar has “Front” and “Back” engraved in the plastic, and an arrow to show which end is “Up”

Before removing the collar, note where the ends of the Velcro strips are positioned. When the collar is put back on the straps it should be in the same position. You may use a pen to mark the positions on the white plastic shell.



There are two methods in applying and removing the Miami J collar. Your physician will tell you which method to use.

Lying Down Method:

1. Lie down without a pillow.
2. Keep your head in a neutral position.
3. Do not bend your neck forward, backward, or from side to side.

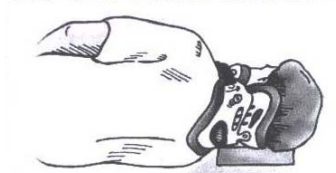


4. Unfasten the Velcro at each side.
5. Remove the front piece.
6. Remove the wet pads and replace with dry pads.

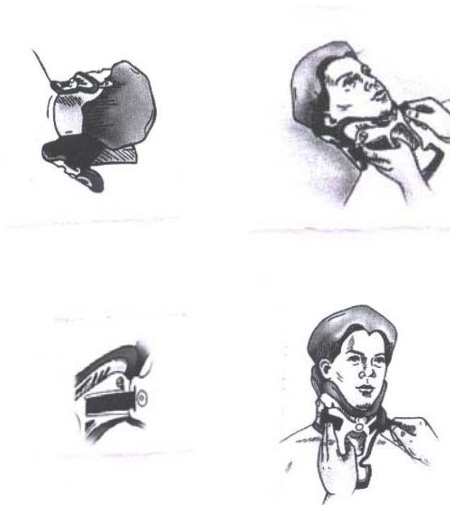


The pads have a shiny side and a dull side. The dull side attaches to the Velcro strips. To attach the pads correctly, fold each one in half with the dull side out. Then center the pad in its location on the plastic shell so it touches the Velcro strips. Adjust the pads as needed to make sure no plastic touches the skin. You should not be able to slip your chin inside the collar; ***it is a clear indication the collar is not snug enough.*** The lower plastic should not be resting on the clavicles (collar bones) nor be digging into the shoulders. There should be no slack or gaps in any of the straps. The large front and back openings are centered on the neck.

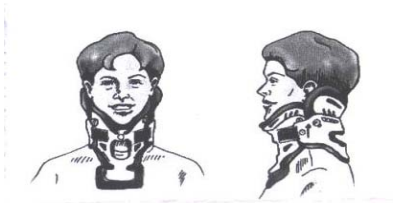
7. Flare the sides of the front out.
8. Slide the front piece up your chest wall and scoop it up under your chin until the chin is seated in the center of the chin piece and rests gently on your shoulders.
9. Sides of the collar front should be directed up toward the person's ear.
10. Hold the front in place with one hand and log roll to your side.



11. Holding the front piece, the back piece may then be removed.
12. Remove the wet pads and replace with dry pads.
13. Bring the back piece forward until the blue pads on the back piece overlap the blue pads on the front piece.
14. Log roll onto your back.
15. Attach the straps on the back piece to the Velcro strips on the front piece.
16. Attach the straps one at a time.
17. Alternately tighten the straps, one at a time until they are in the original marked position. The collar should fit snugly.



18. Check in the mirror to make sure the collar is even. A properly applied collar should look like the diagram below.



Sitting Down Method

(only if allowed by your physician)

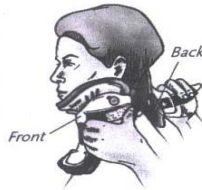
You may remove one piece of the collar at a time to perform skin care, shaving, etc. You should always have someone assisting you to remove and reapply your collar.

1. Sit up straight in a firm chair in front of a mirror.
2. Keep your head and neck in a neutral position (nose in line with the belly button, chin level). Do not bend your neck forward, backward or sideways.

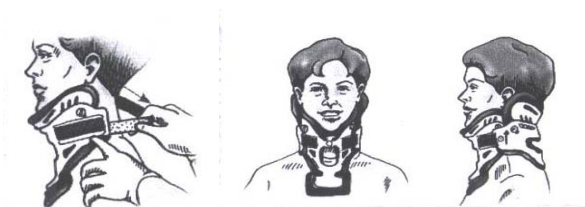


BE CAREFUL NOT TO MOVE YOUR NECK WHILE THIS IS DONE.

3. Unfasten the Velcro at each side.
4. Remove the front piece.
5. Remove the wet pads and replace with dry pads.
6. Replace the front piece.



7. Hold the front in place with one hand.
8. Holding the front, the back piece may then be removed.
9. Remove the wet pads and replace with dry pads and replace the back piece to the front piece.
10. Fasten the Velcro on both sides. The collar should fit snugly.
11. Check in the mirror to make sure the collar is even.



Bathing

You must shower with your collar in place. You should refrain from hot tubs or whirlpools if you have an incision. After your shower, towel dry as normal, while keeping your collar on securely. The Miami J has removable padding that can be changed. It is important to use non-slip bath mats, grab bars, and/or a shower chair in your bathroom to help keep your balance.

Following your shower, lie flat on your back. Undo the Velcro on the wet collar and remove the front portion, while keeping your head and neck still. Wash your neck area with water and mild soap, and then pat dry. You can also shave in this position. However, it is recommended that gentlemen use an electric razor during this time.

Replace the front portion of the wet collar with a dry collar. Holding the front portion of the Miami J, firmly with one hand, roll like a log to your side. Be careful to keep your neck still, and remove the back portion of the wet collar. Wash the back of your neck, and then pat the area dry. Replace the back portion of the wet collar with a dry collar. Roll like a log onto your back, and attach the Velcro straps in place.

Hair Washing

You may shampoo your hair while in the shower, as long as your collar is securely in place. If you have long hair it should be outside of the Miami J collar. Ladies, if you wish to have your hair done, please wash your hair at home and make sure your collar is securely in place during blow drying and styling.

Activity

Avoid strenuous activity such as lifting, pulling and pushing. Any activities which involve straining your neck for any length of time, such as looking down to read a book or working a crossword puzzle should be avoided.

Do not bend, twist or reach above your head until your physician grants you permission. You should not move your head up or down or side to side. It is important to maintain a balanced position of your head and neck, especially from sitting to standing. You should not lift anything heavier than four (4) pounds until your physician gives you permission.

Gradually increase your activities and let your comfort level be your guide. You can expect a certain degree of discomfort and stiffness in the neck shoulders, which should gradually improve. Walking is good exercise but avoid running, jogging, or bicycle riding.

Car rides should be limited to your physician's appointments unless otherwise permitted. You may be a passenger for short distances (20-30 minutes). If you must take a longer trip, make sure to make several pit stops so that you can walk around and stretch your legs. Reclining the passenger seat seems to be the most comfortable position for most people.

ABSOLUTELY NO DRIVING UNTIL YOUR PHYSICIAN GRANTS YOU PERMISSION.

NEVER DRIVE WHILE YOU ARE TAKING NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATION.

Arrange your household to keep the items you need within reach. Do not be afraid to ask for help from others. All electrical cords, throw rugs, or any articles which could cause you to fall should be removed. The usage of a fanny pack, apron or clothing with lots of pockets is ideal to carry things so you can keep your hands free. If you are planning to sit, select chairs with arms. This makes it easier for you to sit down and stand up. Because you will not be able to see your feet when walking, LOOK AHEAD. Be alert for toys, rugs, uneven floor or ground surfaces and pets. Children should be reminded not to run or jump on to your lap as this will jar your head.

Self-Care Aids

It might be recommended to you to use such aids as chair cushion, a raised toilet seat or bathing aids to reduce strain while you are recovering from your surgery or injury.

Sexual Activity

Sexual activity may resume at your discretion.

Wound Instructions

If your incision has Steri-Strips, you may get the incision wet 3-5 days after surgery. At this time, the Steri-Strips can be carefully removed. If you have sutures that can be seen, avoid soaking the incision. You may shower but change the dressing after the shower.

Follow-Up

You will receive an appointment date or given instructions when to see your physician as directed on the patient discharge instruction sheet.

Instructions When To Call

Please call your physician or come to the Emergency Department if you develop the following:

- Redness that does not go away
- Any discharge from the incision
- Increased tenderness
- Increasing discomfort
- Sudden neck or back pain
- Bruising and swelling on the neck or back
- Experience numbness, weakness, tingling or loss of feeling in the arms or legs
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Trouble swallowing
- Loss of bowel and bladder control
- Experience chills, shaking, fever or sweats
- Flu like symptoms

NOTES



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