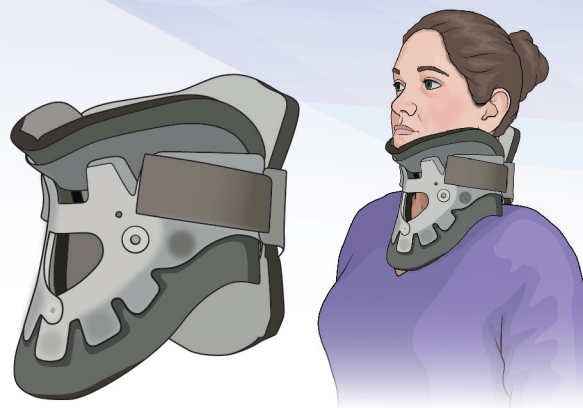




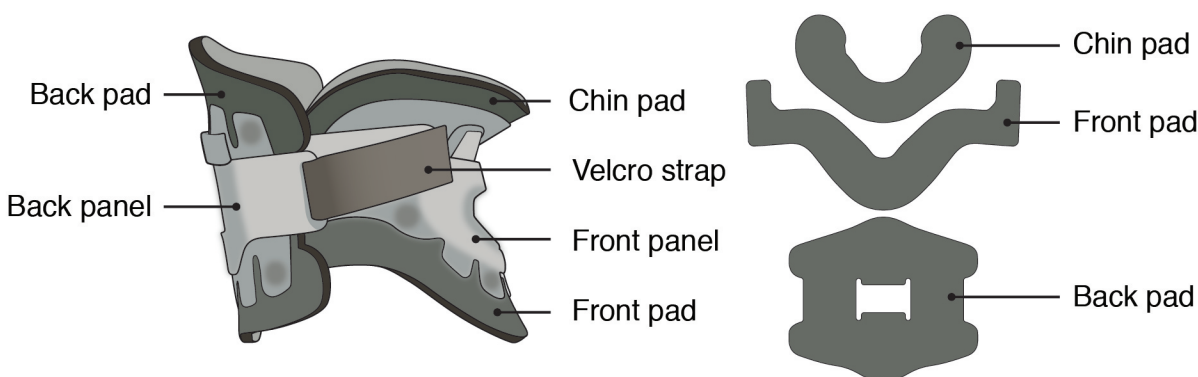
Cervical Collar

A cervical (neck) collar is worn to limit the motion of your neck and upper spine to help healing after a fracture or surgery. You may hear your doctor refer to it as an **Aspen Cervical Collar**. How long you need to wear the collar depends on your injury and your doctor's orders. Usually, patients must wear a cervical collar for at least 3 months at all times.



How to Wear a Cervical Collar

Cervical collars consist of two pieces—a front and back piece held in place by Velcro straps. To make it easier to replace the straps in proper position, mark the ends of the Velcro with a pen or marker. The plastic pieces have pads attached with Velcro strips. You will be given one set of replacement pads with your collar. If you need extra, you can purchase pads online or at a medical supply store.



You or your caregiver should put the back piece of the collar behind your neck first so it is centered. Keep your head and neck in line with your trunk while collar is off:

- Hold the front part of the collar on the sides and slide the collar up, so it rests under your chin. The sides of the collar front should be off of the collarbones, angled toward your ears.
- Curl the front of the collar around your neck so the ends fit inside the back piece of the collar.
- Secure the Velcro straps on each side to the marks. If the strap ends are not marked, tighten one side and then the other, so the straps are the same length on both sides.
- The collar should be a snug fit. You should not be able to move your head.

The collar is fit well if you are not able to slide your chin inside the collar and your chin does not go over the edge. The opening in the middle of the front of the collar should be centered on your neck and no plastic should touch your skin.

You must wear your collar for 3 months at all times during the day and while you sleep. While you wear your collar:

- Do not drive or lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until cleared by your doctor.
- Do not sit for longer than 30 minutes at a time. Get up and change positions frequently.
- You can walk for exercise and you can walk up and down stairs.
- Avoid sitting on low, deep couches. A chair with arms, a firm seat, and an upright back is best.
- Avoid excessive or repetitive bending, twisting, pushing, or pulling.
- Do not smoke. Smoking and nicotine can delay bone and wound healing

Bathing

You cannot wear the Aspen collar in the shower. This is to prevent soaking the brace and weakening the Velcro strap connections. While bathing, you must wear a **Philadelphia** collar that is made of foam and has Velcro straps to hold it in place:

- Put on the Philadelphia collar without bending or turning your neck.
- Keep your head and neck in line with your trunk. You or your caregiver should put the back piece of the collar behind your neck.
- Wrap the collar around your neck, under your chin and secure the Velcro straps. If you have long hair or a beard, be sure the hair is pulled up and outside of the collar.



After your shower, be sure your neck is dry. Lay the Philadelphia collar out flat to dry overnight.

General Care Tips

Check your skin each day for any red, sore, or irritated spots. Your caregiver may need to help you. You should also:

- Avoid using any powder or lotion on your skin under the collar. Powder or lotion can ruin the pads.
- Keep your skin clean and dry under and around the collar.
- Pull your hair up and outside of the collar if it is long or you have a beard.

Cleaning the Collar

To best keep the collar clean during the 3 months of wear, wipe the plastic with a wet cloth or paper towel and mild soap. Pads should be changed at least every day, and more often if they are wet or dirty:

- It is best to replace the pads one at a time, so you do not get them mixed up.
- Remove the pads from the front piece and wipe the plastic off if dirty, and then dry it well.
- You should have an extra set of pads for your collar, so you can hand wash and dry a set while wearing the others.
- Wash the pads with mild soap and water. Do not use any bleach or detergents. Squeeze the pads to work the soap through and rinse well with clean water. Squeeze out any extra water.
- Lay the pads flat to dry. They should air dry in about an hour.

Any Questions or Concerns? Please don't hesitate to call the office at (317) 396-1300 or toll free at (888) 225-5464.

