

# CROFT WHIPLASH TREATMENT GUIDELINES

It is important to stress that guidelines are merely guides to care - not prescriptions for treatment schedules. The patient is always the ultimate guide to the need for care. Guidelines can alert the clinician to possibly missed or occult injuries, in the case where his treatment appears outside the guidelines, or to the possibility that his approach to care needs to be reevaluated.

## THE STAGES OF INJURY

- Stage I** (acute inflammatory stage), 0 - 72 hours;
- Stage II** (repair stage), 72 hours - 14 weeks;
- Stage III** (remodeling stage), 14 weeks - 12 months or more; and
- Stage IV** (chronic; permanent).

## THE FIVE GRADES OF SEVERITY OF CAD TRAUMA

- Grade I:** minimal; no limitation of range of motion, no ligamentous injury, no neurological symptoms;
- Grade II:** slight; limitation of range of motion, no ligamentous injury, no neurological findings;
- Grade III:** moderate; limitation of range of motion, some ligamentous injury, neurological findings present;
- Grade IV:** moderate to severe; limitation of range of motion, ligamentous instability, neurological findings present, fracture or disc derangement; and
- Grade V:** severe, requires surgical treatment and stabilization.

## PLACING THE GRADED PATIENT WITHIN THE FREQUENCY/DURATION TABLE

The table below details these treatment recommendations in tabular form. In the two right hand columns are listed the approximate maximum treatment duration and the approximate maximum number of visits expected to be necessary over that period. Patients not at high risk for poor outcome should not require treatment approaching these maxima. This guideline is based on analysis of approximately 2,000 randomly selected cases from a number of treating practitioners' files.

Grade	Daily	3x/wk	2x/wk	1x/wk	1x/mo	TD	TN
Grade I	1 wk	1-2 wk	2-3 wk	> 4 wk	---*	> 10 wk	> 21
Grade II	1 wk	> 4 wk	> 4 wk	> 4 wk	> 4 mo	> 29 wk	> 33
Grade III	1-2 wk	> 10 wk	> 10 wk	> 10 wk	> 6 mo	> 56 wk	> 76
Grade IV	2-3 wk	> 16 wk	> 12 wk	> 20 wk	**	**	**
Grade V	Surgical stabilization necessary - chiropractic care is post surgical						

**TD** = treatment duration  
**TN** = treatment number

\*possible follow-up at one month  
 \*\*may require permanent monthly or prn care

## POTENTIALLY COMPLICATING FACTORS THAT MAY PROLONG CARE

Advance Age  
 Metabolic disorders  
 Congenital anomalies of the spine  
 Development anomalies of the spine  
 Degenerative disc disease

Disc protrusion/herniation  
 Spondylosis and/or facet arthrosis  
 Arthritis of the spine  
 AS or other spondylarthropathy  
 Prior cervical or lumbar spine surgery

Prior vertebral fracture  
 Osteoporosis or bone disease  
 Spinal or foraminal stenosis  
 Paraplegia/tetraplegia  
 Prior spinal injury; scoliosis

**Recognized by the New Mexico Chiropractic Association (NMCA) July 2004**