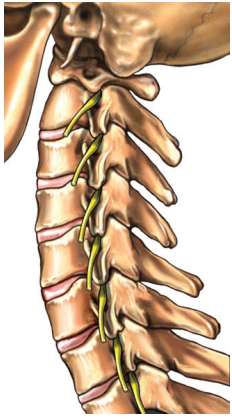


## WHAT IS IT AND WHAT CAUSES IT?



Most people will experience neck pain at some point in their lives. Neck pain can be acute, meaning it lasts a few hours to a few weeks, or it can be chronic. Neck pain that lasts several weeks or longer is considered chronic neck pain. Most causes of neck pain aren't serious.

There are seven vertebrae that are the bony building blocks of the spine in the neck (the cervical vertebrae) that surround the spinal cord and canal. Between these vertebrae are discs, and nearby pass the nerves of the neck.

A variety of causes of neck pain have been identified including osteoarthritis, disc disorders, trauma, whiplash amongst many others. The cause may not be identifiable in a number of patients. This is why your physiotherapist will assess for impaired function of muscle, ligaments and nerve tissue potentially associated with your neck problem.

## WHAT DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE?

In some conditions, particularly those that are degenerative in nature, abnormal findings are not always associated with symptoms. Up to 20% of people without neck pain demonstrate a wide range of abnormalities on imaging studies.

## HOW CAN PHYSIOONE ASSIST?

- We can assist in diagnosing your specific neck problem
- We can educate you on why it is occurring and show you how to manage it
- We can provide stretches for areas which are too tight
- We can provide strengthening and endurance exercises for core areas which are weak and are affecting the alignment of the body
- We can do soft tissue and manual therapy to release tight muscles and stiff joint structures
- We can prescribe nerve mobilisation procedures to help reduce the symptoms of neck and arm pain

Manual therapy including manipulation plus exercise has been found to reduce the symptoms of headaches arising from the neck structures and these effects are maintained (Jull et al, 2002).