**Diagnosis**

**Whiplash-associated disorders (WADs)**

- WAD grade 1: neck symptoms
- WAD grade 2: neck symptoms and musculoskeletal signs
- WAD grade 3: neck symptoms and neurological signs
- WAD grade 4: neck symptoms and fractures or dislocations

Consult referring physician

**Information provided by referring physician**

**History-taking:**
- nature, severity and duration of complaints;
- specific information on causative accident;
- rate of recovery since accident;
- coping strategy and Waddell’s signs;
- present levels of functioning, activity and social participation (use VAS\(^1\) and NDI\(^2\)).

**Physical examination:**
- observation of posture and overt pain behavior;
- range of local active cervical movement;
- muscular stability and proprioception.

**Analysis:**
- health problems related to whiplash injury;
- time since causative accident;
- prognostic factors related to recovery;
- coping strategy;
- normal or delayed recovery.

Can patient’s health problem be influenced by physiotherapy?

**Treatment plan:**
- Normal recovery: primary goal is to improve functioning and increase levels of activity and social participation.
- Delayed recovery: primary goals are to influence factors responsible for poor progress and to improve active coping.

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\(^1\)VAS = visual analogue scale; \(^2\)NDI = neck disability index.
**Main treatment goals**

**Enable the patient to move normally without provoking pain by**
- reducing pain
- providing information and explaining the consequences of whiplash injury

**Enable the patient to return to normal activities by**
- providing information and explaining the consequences of whiplash injury
- improving functioning

**Build up level of activities by:**
- providing information and explaining the consequences of whiplash injury;
- improving functioning;
- increasing levels of activity and social participation.

**Improve active coping strategies and self-control, and gradually increase activities.**

**Build up level of activities by**
- providing information and explaining the consequences of whiplash injury;
- increasing levels of activity and social participation

**Enable the patient to return to normal activities by**
- providing information and explaining the consequences of whiplash injury
- improving functioning

**Build up level of activities by:**
- increasing levels of activity and social participation

**Evaluation of treatment goals.**

**Termination of treatment**