

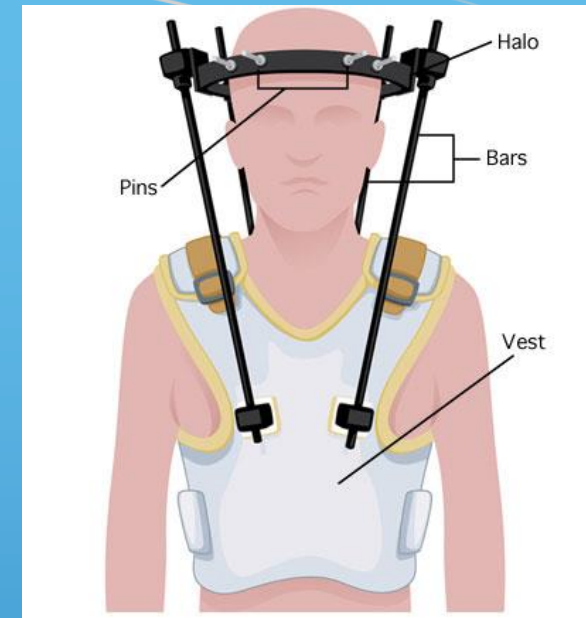
Contact your spine specialist or primary healthcare provider if:

- You have a fever.
- You see a skin rash, redness, or sores under your brace.
- You have problems swallowing while you are wearing your halo brace.
- Your neck pain is not getting better even with treatment.
- You have questions or concerns about your cervical fracture, medicine, or care.



Seek care immediately or call 911 if:

- You have a sudden, severe headache with nausea and vomiting.
- You are seeing double or cannot see out of 1 eye.
- You cannot stay awake.
- The pins in your halo brace have loosened or look deeper in the skin than before.
- You feel new weakness or numbness in your hands or fingers.
- You are short of breath.
- You cannot feel or move your arms or legs.
- You have chest pain or trouble breathing that is getting worse over time.
- You suddenly feel lightheaded and have trouble breathing.
- You have new and sudden chest pain. You may have more pain when you take deep breaths or cough. You may cough up blood.
- Your arm or leg feels warm, tender, and painful. It may look swollen and red.



www.seattlechildrens.org

Cervical spinal surgery

Reference:

Drugs.com (2014) Cervical Fracture Retrieved from <http://www.drugs.com/cg/cervical-fracture-discharge-care.html>

Stenberg College Psychiatric Nursing
Students
July 2014

Patient Care

Information regarding the care of
your halo and vest

After you leave the hospital...

What is a cervical fracture?

**A cervical fracture is a break in one or more of the seven cervical vertebrae in a patient's neck.*

**Cervical vertebrae supports one's head, allowing the neck to bend and twist.*

**The Vertebrae is a protective wall that protects the spinal cord.*

Causes of a cervical spine fracture:

**The majority of cervical fractures are caused by sudden, forceful impact.*

They would include :

**Motor vehicle accidents*

**Falls*

**Dives into shallow water*

**Injuries from contact sports*

**Skateboarding injuries*

Medicines:

**Pain medicine: You may be given medicine to take away or decrease pain. Do not wait until the pain is severe before you take your medicine.*

**Take your medicine as directed.*

**Call your healthcare provider if you think your medicine is not helping or if you have side effects.*

**Tell him if you are allergic to any medicine.*

**Keep a list of the medicines, vitamins, and herbs you take. Include the amounts, and when and why you take them.*

**Bring the list or the pill bottles to follow-up visits.*

**Carry your medicine list with you in case of an emergency.*

Follow up with your spine specialist or primary healthcare provider as directed:

**Write down your questions so you remember to ask them during your visits.*

Skin and brace care:

**Skin breakdown can lead to deep wounds caused by pressure or pulling on your skin.*

**Check your chin, ears, back of your head, and shoulders for redness or sores if you are wearing a brace.*

**Check the skin daily around halo brace pins for signs of infection, such as redness or bad-smelling drainage.*

**Change your vest lining if it gets wet. Ask your caregiver how to care for your halo pins and vest.*

**Ask your caregiver for more information about using a halo brace, semirigid collar, or soft collar.*

Therapy:

**A physical therapist and an occupational therapist may exercise your arms, legs, and hands. They may also teach you new ways to do things around the house.*

**A speech therapist may work with you to help you talk or swallow.*

Wound care:

**Ask your caregiver to show you how to care for your wound.*