

# PEDIATRIC WHIPLASH

## Parent Quick Reference Guide



### What is Pediatric Whiplash?

- Whiplash occurs when a child's neck is quickly whipped back and forth.
- Common after rear-end collisions—even at low speeds.
- Children are especially vulnerable due to underdeveloped muscles and larger head-to-body ratio.

### Common Symptoms

- Neck pain or stiffness
- Headaches, especially at the base of the skull
- Irritability or changes in mood
- Difficulty concentrating or sleeping
- Nausea or dizziness



### At Home Care Tips For Parents

- Encourage rest without complete inactivity
- Use ice/heat appropriately
- Ensure ergonomic support (pillows, chairs)
- Monitor screen time and posture
- Stay consistent with follow-up care

### When to Seek Medical Help

#### Seek Immediate Help If:

- Your child has trouble walking or balancing
- There's loss of consciousness (even briefly)
- Vomiting, severe headache, or confusion
- Numbness or tingling in limbs

#### Call Your Doctor If You See These Symptoms:

- Unusual drowsiness or personality changes
- Pain radiating to arms, chest, or abdomen
- Loss of bladder or bowel control
- Child is not improving as expected



### Questions You Can Ask

- What symptoms should I expect in the first few days after the injury?
- Are there any signs that could mean something more serious?
- How can I tell if my child is in pain if they aren't verbalizing it?
- What's the difference between normal recovery symptoms and a red flag?
- Should I take my child to the ER or urgent care?
- Is imaging (like X-rays or MRIs) necessary, and if so, when?
- What's the expected timeline for recovery?
- What activities should my child avoid, and for how long?
- Do you recommend follow-up imaging or evaluations (post-treatment)?
- How will we track my child's recovery and improvement?
- When can my child safely return to school, sports, or playdates?