

Multiple traumas weaken spine

Question: I recently was in my third auto accident in 3 years and wanted to know the effect this has on my spine. Each time I have felt worse and all the old injuries hurt again. What can I do to stop the pain?

Answer: Multiple motor vehicle accidents to the same person are very common. Whether you were the driver or the passenger, even the mildest fender bender can create severe trauma to your spine and nervous system. Multiple injuries from multiple accidents complicate pre-existing conditions and can create new conditions making treatment and healing tedious and prolonged.

Every injury to soft tissue, which includes muscles, tendons, cartilage and connective tissue results in an immediate response to provide a matrix of healing elements by the bodies natural innate systems. The brain responds to pain and trauma to tissues by telling these systems to send calcium and minerals via the blood stream. These healing elements accumulate at the injury sites forming a thicker tissue than the original tissue. This is similar to bone fractures where the fracture site develops a callous formation. This healing soft-tissue area anywhere around the spine is designed to replenish and restore the damaged tissue, unfortunately the by-product of the healing is a shorter, less elastic tissue. This scar or adhesive tissue as it is called accumulates within hours after a trauma.

Many years ago the philosophy was to immobilize the damaged tissue until all healing occurred. Modern understanding of how healing occurs suggests we mobilize the injured tissue as soon as possible (after inflammation resides) to

prevent the accumulation of this scar tissue so as much elasticity can be recovered to the injured area.

Multiple injuries to the same area create multiple scar-tissue development in these regions. The thicker the scar tissue the less the flexibility to the tissue. Spinal irritations from trauma are even more complicated because lack-of-motion around the joints of the spine can disrupt nerve supply at its origin. A whiplash injury to the neck can effect the nerves that travel down your arm. Restricted neck movement can alter the nerve and blood supply to the upper extremities.

Another complication of multiple traumas is the delayed symptomatic response. It is very common to not feel your symptoms up to weeks or even months after the accident. By this time scar tissue has set in and that is why you may now be feeling pain or other symptoms.

Whether it is a minor accident or severe crash always get checked immediately by your chiropractor. The chiropractic adjustment restores motion back into your spine, which will prevent or minimize the accumulation of scar tissue. Multiple traumas absolutely require treatment to restore integrity to the soft tissue and joints of the spine.

Quote of the week: “Do not worry if the sun will rise. Be prepared to enjoy it.” –

Anonymous