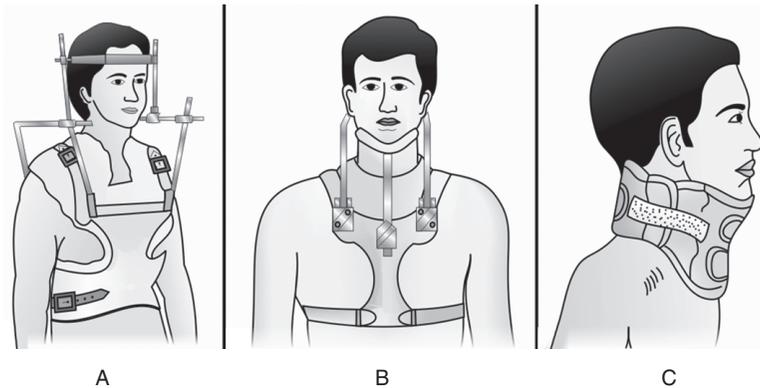


totally avoided. If the patient needs resuscitation, it has to be carried out with a lot of care.

### At the Hospital

*Non-operative treatment:* Most cases can be treated non-operatively by halo vest, four post-cervical collars, Minerva jacket, cervical collars, etc. (Figs 2.18A to C).

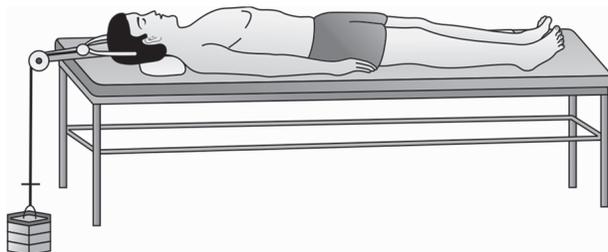


**Figs 2.18A to C:** Methods of cervical immobilization: (A) Halo-vest traction, (B) Four post cervical collar, (C) Cervical collar

### Indications

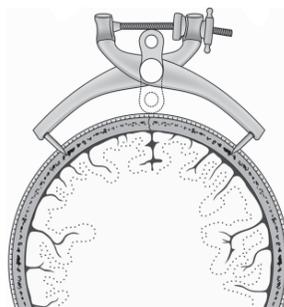
- Stable cervical spine with no neurological injury. A rigid cervical brace or halo for 8–12 week is usually sufficient.
- Stable compression fracture of vertebral bodies and undisplaced fracture of laminae, lateral masses or spinous process.
- Unilateral facet dislocations reduced in traction may be immobilized in a halo vest for 8–12 weeks.

**Skeletal traction:** Reduction with traction is done for unstable fracture (Fig. 2.19). Urgency of reduction is based on neurological loss. Traction is given for 3–6 weeks and once satisfactory reduction is achieved, the patient is mobilized with a collar, corset or jacket.



**Fig. 2.19:** Skeletal traction applied through Crutchfield tongs

*Halo vest immobilization:* Many unstable cervical spine injuries can initially be managed by cervical traction through a halo ring. After obtaining the alignment of the cervical spine, halo vest may be completed.



**Fig. 2.20:** Crutchfield tongs

### **Surgical Treatment**

*Indications:* Unstable injuries with or without neurological damage require surgery.

### **Methods**

- In most patients early open reduction and internal fixation (ORIF) is indicated to obtain stability. Cervical spine is stabilized through an anterior or posterior approach. Usually, a posterior approach is used with triple wire stabilization and fusion with iliac bone grafting. This allows rapid mobilization of the patient in a cervical orthosis.
- Anterior decompression consists of removal of the disk and is recommended when disk prolapse is present.
- Anterior cervical plating allows for immediate rigid fixation after decompression and bone grafting. The plates used are H-type or Caspar plates. Recently cervical spine



# 3

## *Common Neck Pain*

This chapter deals with important common neck pain conditions.

### **Types of Neck Pain**

There are many causes of neck pain, some are uncommon causes but a majority are due to common causes. The common neck pains are due to problems in the neck muscles, ligaments and discs resulting from faulty neck postures, daily neck misadventures, etc. These account for more than 80% of the neck pains around the globe. Let us first know about uncommon neck pains.

*Note:* There are many types of neck pains, but you account for the common ones!

### **UNCOMMON NECK PAINS (UCNPS)**

Like any other structure in the body, your neck can also be a seat of various diseases. Uncommon neck pains are due to diseases of the neck like:

1. *Congenital conditions:* The child has a tilted neck from early newborn days. This is called congenital torticollis or wryneck (Fig. 3.1).
2. *Infective conditions:* Tuberculosis of the bones, acute infections like acute osteomyelitis, enlarged lymph nodes in the sides of the neck can all lead to very painful conditions.
3. *Inflammatory conditions:* Notable ones among these are rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, etc.



**Fig. 3.1:** Wryneck

4. *Metabolic disorders:* Osteoporosis in old age can cause considerable weakness of the neck bones resulting in pain, and deformity leading to hunchback.
5. *Trauma:* Various fractures and dislocations and major neck ligament injuries due to road traffic accidents or violent falls on the head, etc. can lead to very severe neck pains (Fig. 3.2A).

Uncommon neck pains are usually severe in nature and have to be managed by a professional. A detailed discussion about the uncommon neck pains is outside the scope of this book and is hence avoided. Our discussion mainly centres on the common neck pains wherein you play an important part in its causation. Consequently, you should play an important role in its termination too with active support from the doctors.

### **COMMON NECK PAINS (CNP)**

From a child to a professional, to a student, to an athlete, or an elderly, anybody can become a victim of common neck pain (CNP). It can be categorically stated that there is nobody on this planet who have not experienced neck pain in his or her lifetime.

Common neck pains are so called because they are very common. Depending on the intensity and severity of neck pain they are divided into two categories—acute and chronic.