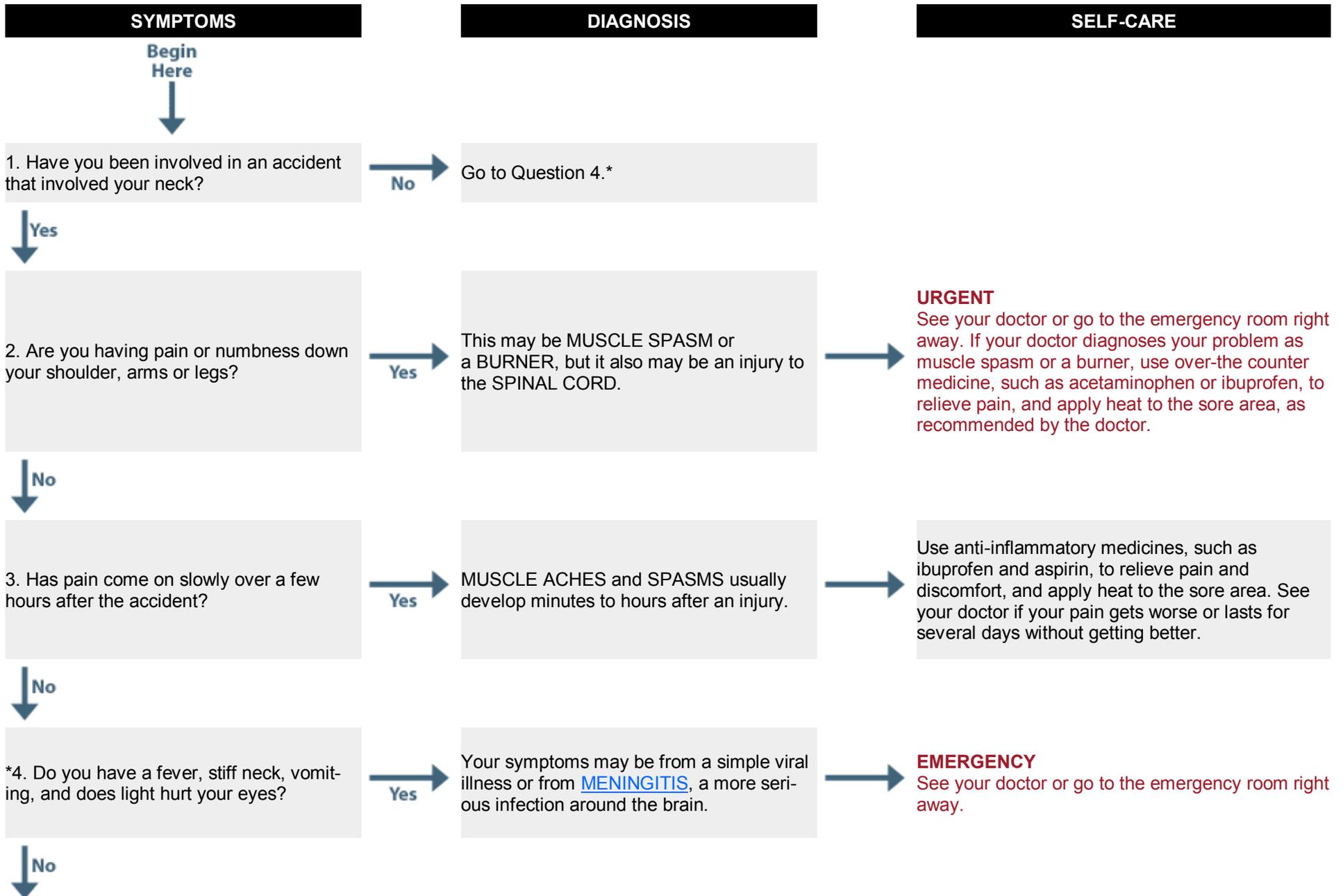


# Neck Pain

Neck pain can be caused by injury, stress or by other health problems, including some that may have serious consequences. Follow this chart if you have been suffering from pain, stiffness, soreness or cramps in the neck.



5. Do you have throbbing pain or numbness down your shoulder or into your arm?

Yes →

You may have a HERNIATED CERVICAL DISK, when part of the center portion of the spine presses against a nerve. It may also be from MUSCLE SPASM.

→

See your doctor. Use over-the-counter medicine, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, to relieve pain, and apply heat to the sore area. If your symptoms came on suddenly, see your doctor

↓ No

6. Do you have a stiff neck or are you having trouble moving your neck without pain?

Yes →

Your pain is probably from MUSCLE SPASM, but also may be from RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS, an inflammatory joint disease, or FIBROMYALGIA, a chronic condition affecting muscles and tendons.

→

Use anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen or aspirin, and apply heat to the sore area. See your doctor if the pain or stiffness gets worse or doesn't get better.

↓ No

7. Did you have a whiplash-type injury in the past, or do you have pain and/or stiffness every day in your neck, hands, knees, hips or other joints?

Yes →

Your pain may be from DEGENERATIVE CERVICAL ARTHRITIS, a disorder that affects the bones and cartilage in the neck.

→

Use anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen or aspirin. See your doctor if the pain or stiffness gets worse or doesn't get better.

↓ No

For more information, please talk to your doctor. If you think the problem is serious, call your doctor right away.

*This tool has been reviewed by doctors and is for general educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for medical advice. The information in this tool should not be relied upon to make decisions about your health. Always consult your family doctor with questions about your individual condition(s) and/or circumstances. Source: American Academy of Family Physicians. Family Health & Medical Guide. Dallas: Word Publishing; 1996.*