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CRANIAL SURGERY
MICRONEUROSURGERY
SPINAL INSTRUMENTATION

CERVICAL AND LUMBAR SPRAIN / STRAIN

Sprain / strain indicate injury to soft tissues, such as muscles, tendons and ligaments. When the neck is involved with a sprain / strain, it is called a cervical sprain / strain or also known as whiplash. If the lower back is involved, it is called a lumbar sprain / strain. Both of these are common injuries. A similar, but less common injury involving the mid back is called thoracic sprain / strain.

Sprain / strain is a soft tissue injury often caused by maintaining a single position for an extended time in an awkward posture, over stretching a muscle. Often these are related to trauma, such as fall or whiplash; sports injuries, fall, a blow to the area, etc. Sprain / strain can be very painful. The muscles can be painful to the touch, in spasm and range of motion can be reduced. A minor sprain / strain will improve in a few days without any treatment. When the pain is more persistent, diagnostic imaging may be ordered to confirm there is not a more serious injury.

Sprain / strain is not treated surgically. Rather, it is treated initially by rest for 1 to 3 days and the use of icing for a few minutes several times per day. After a few days, gradual increasing range of motion and return to normal activities is recommended. Sometimes, pain relievers, especially non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications and muscle relaxants can be helpful. Physical therapy is often used during this phase. Rarely, injection therapy is offered. Occasionally, sprain / strain can become chronic due to injury to the underlying joints. This is usually not apparent until the sprain / strain component of the injury has resolved. Further diagnostic tests and treatment, often with injections, may be indicated.

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