Selective Spinal Splinting

PROCEDURE

STEPS

1. Complete the algorithm provided — one 'yes' in a section and the patient gets a C-collar
2. Bring the head to eyes-forward inline position; maintain inline stabilization
3. Measure the 'key dimension': trapezius at the base of the neck to the bottom of the chin, using your fingers
4. Match it against the Stiffneck collar's sizing post-to-bottom distance; secure the locking clip before placement
5. Pre-form the collar to the estimated shape
6. Slide the loop fastener end under the neck (supine patient); hands on either side of the tracheal opening
7. Slide the collar up the chest wall and under the chin; chin flush with the end of the chin piece
8. Tighten: pull the loop end parallel with the ground, then up to the hook fastener; inspect chin position and adjust

DOCUMENT IT

- The documentation form, in the signatures tab, is marked with the path and initialed by the provider who completed the algorithm

BEFORE YOU START

- For patients who meet criteria for cervical splinting
- A properly sized C-collar must be used
- Penetrating trauma: do NOT immobilize unless a focal neurological deficit is noticed
- Handle with extreme care; remind the patient to be as still as possible; transport in position of comfort
- Backboards are used for extrication and patient movement only

KIT YOU NEED

- Stiffneck extrication C-collar, correctly sized to the patient

IF IT GOES WRONG

- Chin not properly positioned in the chin piece: adjust the collar
- The hand at the tracheal opening prevents counter-rotational forces while tightening

Take Home Message:

Size the collar by the key dimension, lock the clip before placement, and remember: backboards are for extrication and movement only.