Neck pain or neck stiffness

Please print this form, check **one box per question**, and bring the completed form to your appointment. These are the questions your neurologist is most likely to ask about this symptom — answering them on paper first makes the visit faster and more accurate. If you are unsure of an answer, check "Not sure".

Your name _____ Date of birth _____ Today's date _____

1A. Safety screen

Answer every question. If any answer is "Yes" or "Not sure", follow the instruction shown below the question — these can be emergencies.

Is there new urinary retention, loss of bladder or bowel control, saddle numbness, or new sexual dysfunction?

☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

If yes: Go to an emergency department now for cauda-equina assessment; do not wait for routine imaging.

Is there rapidly progressing weakness in one or more limbs, a sensory level, or new inability to walk?

☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

If yes: Seek emergency assessment now for possible spinal-cord compression or another acute cord process.

Is there fever, immune suppression, recent spinal procedure, injection-drug use, cancer, or severe unremitting night pain?

☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

If yes: Arrange same-day assessment; fever or progressive neurological deficits require emergency care.

Did significant trauma precede the pain, or is there new deformity or immediate neurological loss?

☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

If yes: Seek emergency assessment now and avoid unnecessary movement of the spine.

1B. Timeline

Use the first occurrence for recurrent episodes and the current episode for a changing symptom.

How did the symptom begin?

☐ Suddenly, over seconds or minutes ☐ Over hours to days ☐ Gradually over weeks or months

☐ Longstanding or since childhood ☐ Not sure

Use the first occurrence for recurrent episodes; use the current episode for a changing symptom.

What is the overall course?

☐ One persistent episode ☐ Separate recurrent episodes ☐ Steadily worsening ☐ Fluctuating or variable

☐ Currently resolved

Has this exact pattern been assessed before?

☐ Definitely new ☐ The same pattern occurred before ☐ Present and stable for a long time ☐ Not sure

1C. Discriminating features

Does pain radiate into the head, shoulder, arm, or hand?

☐ Neck only ☐ Down one arm or into fingers ☐ Into the back of the head ☐ Into both arms

Is pain clearly related to posture, movement, or a specific injury?

☐ Worse with neck movement or posture ☐ Began after injury or manipulation ☐ Constant and not mechanically related

☐ Not sure

Are there arm or hand neurological symptoms?

☐ None ☐ Tingling or numbness ☐ Weakness, clumsiness, or dropping objects ☐ Not sure

Is there fever, major stiffness, severe headache, or a recent infection/procedure?

☐ No ☐ Fever or infection risk ☐ Severe headache with marked stiffness ☐ Not sure

1D. Associated findings

Record other clues and the effect on usual activities. New associated symptoms can change urgency.

Are there other neurological symptoms—weakness, numbness, speech change, double vision, swallowing difficulty, or severe imbalance?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Are there systemic clues—fever, weight loss, cancer, infection risk, pregnancy/postpartum status, or a new medication?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

How much does this affect daily activity?

☐ Noticeable but activities continue ☐ Some activities are limited ☐ Cannot perform usual activities ☐ Not sure

1E. Clinical context

These answers help distinguish medication, medical, neurological, and pre-existing contributors.

Who is being assessed?

☐ Adult or adolescent ☐ Child under 12 ☐ Adult aged 65 or older

Could a medicine, substance, withdrawal, or recent dose change be relevant?

☐ No plausible contributor ☐ Yes or possibly ☐ Not reviewed

Include sedatives, dopamine-blocking drugs, stimulants, decongestants, anticholinergics, alcohol, and non-prescribed substances when relevant.

Is there a relevant neurological, muscular, metabolic, cardiovascular, autoimmune, or sleep disorder?

☐ No known relevant condition ☐ Yes ☐ Not sure

What prior information is available?

☐ A previous examination or investigation ☐ Prior records but no clear explanation ☐ No useful prior assessment ☐ Not sure

1F. Additional history

Use the lines below to record exact dates and times, witness details, current medications and any recent dose changes, prior tests or investigation reports, and what your usual baseline function is.

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This form collects your history only. It cannot diagnose, triage, or exclude an emergency, and it is not medical advice. Call 911 for severe, sudden, or worsening symptoms.