fastening straps. This should be done on a daily basis, to allow a 3rd party to wash dry your neck and check your skin. You should expect to see reddened skin however, if the skin is sore or broken please contact the department

- The pads can be removed, hand washed and allowed to dry before reattaching them. Spare sets are available from the ward or department

Cervical Thoracic Brace (Lerman Minerva CTO)

- Cervical Thoracic Brace (Lerman Minerva CTO) is used were control of the lower cervical and upper thoracic spinal injuries, is made up of a front and rear sections, the size and position will have been set by the orthotist when it was supplied

- The Lerman Minerva CTO should be fitted by a 3rd party. It has 6 fastening straps. To apply, you must be lying down. The rear section should be positioned behind you, so your head sits in the head rest. Offer the front of the CTO so it sits under the chin and on the chest and to the patient and fasten the 4 straps on the trunk (2 waist, 2 shoulder straps) finally the 2 straps from the back of the head to the chin. Check the Lerman Minerva CTO is being worn firmly – if it is worn too loose will allow movement of the neck and may be detrimental to your treatment

- To take the brace off, lie down. The 6 fastening straps can be undone and the front section removed. This should be done on a daily basis, to allow a 3rd party to wash dry your neck and check your skin. You should expect to see reddened skin however, if the skin is sore or broken please contact the department

- The device is supplied with a spare set of pads allowing those in place to be removed, hand washed and allowed to dry before reattaching them

Can I have a shower?

If you have had a trauma injury or surgery, and you have been advised to wear your collar 24 hours per day, then you must not remove it for a shower. If you have any doubt please speak to your Consultant or Doctor.

What happens if I have a problem?

If you have a problem with your brace, please contact:

Orthotics Department
Outpatients Area 1, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB), Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2WB
Telephone: 0121 371 6415/6

The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4957.
Cervical collars and cervical thoracic devices

Your cervical orthoses has been prescribed for your use by your consultant/doctor and has been assessed and fitted by the orthotist. This leaflet provides information about the most commonly used cervical orthoses used within the Trust; these are:

- Miami J collar referred to in this leaflet as a cervical collar
- Lerman Minerva cervical thoracic orthoses; referred to in this leaflet as a cervical thoracic brace

Why do I need to wear the cervical collar or cervical thoracic brace?

The reasons that patients need to wear a cervical orthoses vary and may include trauma or a post-operative or pre-existing condition e.g. rheumatoid arthritis. They can be used to control the movement of the neck following trauma or surgery, for pain control and relief of symptoms.

How long do I need to wear the cervical collar/cervical thoracic brace for?

Your consultant/doctor will tell you how long you will need to wear the brace. For trauma and post-operative patients this is normally for 12 weeks from the date of injury/surgery.

Do I need to wear the cervical collar/thoracic brace day and night?

You should seek the advice of your consultant/doctor, however if you are wearing your cervical orthoses due to trauma and you have been told that your fracture has been classed as being unstable then you will need to wear your cervical collar or cervical thoracic brace day and night.

If you have undergone surgery then it is likely that you will need to wear it day and night, even if you are sleeping. The only time you can remove your brace is to check the integrity of the skin and washing which must be done on your behalf by a third party, on a daily basis.

As your condition improves, your consultant may advise you that you can have longer periods of time without your brace.

How do I put the cervical collar/cervical thoracic brace on correctly?

When the device is supplied the orthotist will instruct you how to fit your cervical collar or cervical thoracic brace.

The cervical collar or cervical thoracic brace needs to be worn firmly and both devices need to be worn next to the skin.

The aim of either device is to hold your head in a neutral position, which is with your eyesight level, looking straight ahead and not to one side or the other.

The Cervical collar (Miami J collar)

The Cervical collar (Miami J collar) is made up of a front and rear sections. When the Miami J collar was fitted the shape adjustment buttons will have been locked into the correct position – looking at the front and the back the locking button (4 in total) should be in a horizontal position (periodic checking recommended).

The Miami J Collar should only be removed and refitted by a 3rd party. The Miami J has 2 fastening straps, 1 at each side. When applying the rear of the collar (to assist there is an arrow pointing up) place it on the back of the neck. The person fitting the collar, needs to hold the collar by the sides, and pull them back towards themselves i.e. so the front of the looks as it is in a straight line. The front is then offered to the chin, placing it under the chin, scooping the side around the side of the jaw in a upwards motion and fastening the Velcro. The back section of the collar should overlap the front when fastened. The collar fastening will require final adjustment. Ensure that the straps on both sections are in alignment, that the blue padding extends beyond the white plastic to prevent pressure on the skin.

Check the collar is being worn firmly – a collar being worn too loose will allow movement of the neck and may be detrimental to your treatment.

- To take the brace off, undo the 2