

Driver Zone

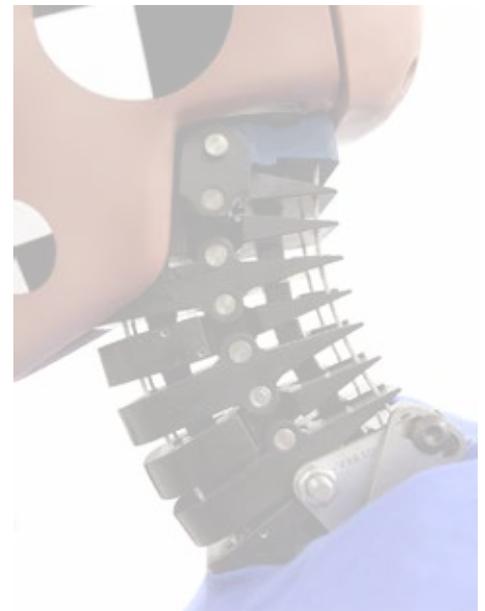


HOW TO PREVENT WHIPLASH

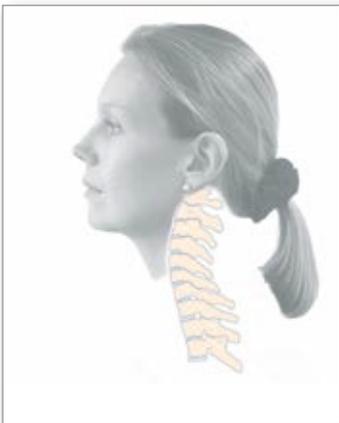
IS YOUR HEAD RESTRAINT CORRECTLY ADJUSTED?

As the most common injury in car crashes in the UK, whiplash is reported in 80% of injury claims, costing around £2.5bn per year and adding £93 to the average motor premium. The injury typically occurs at low speed when the front of one vehicle runs into the back of the car in front.

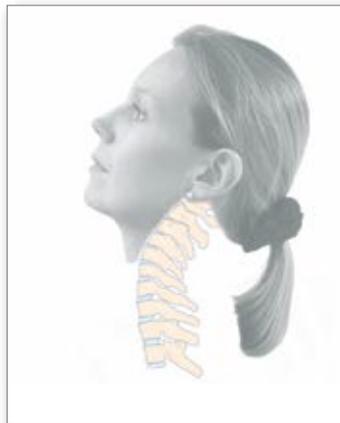
Whiplash is thought to occur during the rapid differential movement of the body relative to the head, when the seat moves forward in a rear-end crash and the head lags behind, initially forcing the neck into an extension. The resulting injuries are often fairly minor but some can lead to long term debilitating pain.



NORMAL



EXTENSION



Women more at risk

Those at greatest risk from whiplash are women in the 20 to 50 age group. Women are more likely to suffer from whiplash injuries than men and are also more likely to go on to develop long term symptoms. Factors influencing this difference include seating posture and neck strength.

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A PROPERLY POSITIONED HEAD RESTRAINT IS THE NECESSARY FIRST STEP IN REDUCING THE RELATIVE MOTION BETWEEN HEAD AND NECK, THEREBY REDUCING INJURY

ONE: To offer sufficient protection, a head restraint should be as high as the top of the head and as close to the back of the head as comfortably possible - touching is best.

TWO: Although most head restraints are adjustable, research indicates about two thirds of drivers fail to adjust their seat's head restraint even though the majority are easy to adjust.

THREE: The best seats are designed to support the occupant's head very early in an impact and can mitigate the severity of any injury.

FOUR: Some modern seats now often have a fixed one piece head restraint that doesn't require adjustment and covers a range of occupant sizes.

CORRECT HEIGHT



TOO LOW



TOO HIGH



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PROTECTION IS JUST AS IMPORTANT IN THE BACK OF THE CAR WHERE HEAD RESTRAINTS COMMONLY TEND TO BE POOR.

Rear seats are often designed to have a 'non-use position' so they don't obstruct the driver's view if the back seats are unoccupied. However, passengers must adjust the head restraint to the 'in-use' position when they enter the vehicle to protect the neck in the event of an accident.



NON-USE POSITION IN-USE POSITION



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NON-USE POSITION IN-USE POSITION



Since 2005, Thatcham has been testing seats and head restraints for their ability to protect occupants from whiplash injury in a typical rear-end crash.

In 2005, only 18% of seats were 'Good' and 36% classed as 'Poor'. By 2013, 80% were rated 'Good' and no seats were classed as 'Poor'.

In 2014, Euro NCAP introduced new tests to assess the effectiveness of rear seat head restraints as part of their overall safety rating, thus encouraging vehicle manufacturers to improve seats for every occupant in the vehicle.

www.thatcham.org/safety/whiplash



ALWAYS ENSURE HEAD RESTRAINTS ARE CORRECTLY POSITIONED BEFORE SETTING OUT ON YOUR JOURNEY. REMEMBER TO DO THE SAME WHETHER YOU ARE THE DRIVER OR A PASSENGER IN THE FRONT OR BACK OF A VEHICLE.