

## Whiplash and the Automobile Accident

You are driving down the road and the next thing you know you're involved in an automobile accident. Immediately after the accident you are pretty shaken up but don't feel the need to receive any medical attention. Later that night, your neck begins to stiffen up and it feels like your head is about to explode. By the next day, you find yourself in extreme pain and have a host of symptoms from nausea to dizziness.

If this scenario sounds familiar, it probably means that you are suffering from whiplash syndrome. Whiplash is a common term for an acceleration/deceleration injury to the neck or cervical spine. This type of injury is the most common suffered by auto accident victims, and can range in severity to mild to life threatening. The term "whiplash" is derived from the manner in which the cervical spine reacts to the force of a motor vehicle accident. For instance, if you are in a car and get hit from behind, the sudden acceleration will cause your head to initially snap back and then as the car begins to decelerate your head will whip forward. Both of these motions can cause extensive damage to the muscles, ligaments, tendons and joints of the cervical spine. In some cases the blood vessels and the brain itself can be damaged due to a whiplash injury. The symptoms of whiplash include neck pain, headache, nausea, blurred vision, vertigo, ringing in the ears, indigestion, numbness and tingling in the hands, difficulty swallowing and a host of other maladies.

Whiplash is a serious condition that should be treated by a health care professional. If the proper treatment is not received the possibility of a long-term chronic condition of pain and degeneration is certainly significant.

\*\*For more information on whiplash diagnosis and treatment please call Dr. Bernie Sengstock at (516) 277-0060. His office is located at Spinecare/American Comprehensive Medical, 369 East Main St., East Islip NY. You can also receive your free Auto Accident Information Packet by calling the Auto Accident Hot line toll free at 1-(800) 296-2626.