

TORTICOLLIS (WRY NECK)

Torticollis is the technical name for neck pain or a stiff neck.

The pain and stiffness usually gets better after a few days or weeks, and is rarely a sign of a more serious problem.

You can get a painful or stiff neck if you sleep in an awkward position, use a computer for a prolonged period of time, strain a muscle because of bad posture, or the neck is exposed to air currents.

Anxiety and stress can also sometimes cause tension in your neck muscles, which can lead to pain in your neck.

Torticollis means 'twisted neck'. The neck becomes twisted to one side. The most common type of torticollis is acute torticollis, also known as 'wry neck'.

Some people suddenly wake up one morning to find their neck twisted to one side and stuck in that position. This is known as acute torticollis and is caused by injury to the neck muscles.

The exact cause of acute torticollis is unknown, but it may be caused by bad posture, sleeping without adequate neck support, or carrying heavy unbalanced loads (for example, carrying a heavy bag with one arm).

Acute torticollis can take up to a week to get better, but it usually only lasts 24 to 48 hours. For some people, torticollis becomes a recurrent problem. As shiatsu therapists, we can help make the recovery much shorter.

In some cases, nearby nerves can also be squashed, resulting in pain that radiates from the arms, pins and needles, and numbness in the hands and legs. If this is the case, always insist on medical diagnosis.

TESTS

1. Medical history.

- Where is the pain, area, left or right side, etc.
- Acute or chronic. How long.
- What time is better or worse, i.e. in the morning, after using computer, after exercise, etc.
- Sleep position

1. Observation.

- Observe if the neck is twisted when the person is standing, and later when the person is lying down.

A twisted neck indicates weak or contracted muscles to the side the neck is turned to.

- Assess symmetry of shoulders.
- Check position and symmetry of arms.

2. Palpation.

- Palpate very carefully the neck (especially posterior and lateral) for tenderness, pain, lumps or swelling.

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- 3. Range of motion. (slowly and carefully)
 - a) Flexion
 - b) Lateral flexion
 - c) Rotation.

- 5. Supine assessment.
 - a) Manual back traction
 - b) Manual cervical traction (very very carefully)

SHIATSU TREATMENT

1. Head should not be turned to one side. Either work on a couch with a face hole or on the patient's side if working on a futon.

2. Avoid inflamed areas.

3. Rotate toes, and wrists. If pain is only on one side, rotate the opposite shoulder (when patient in prone position). Optional: rotate ankles and fingers.

4. Sotai exercises. 1, 2, 3. The spiderman is very good for neck problems, but never try when the stiffness is acute and the person can hardly move their neck.
Feet sotais:

abduction/adduction



dorsiflexion/plantar flexion



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inversion/eversion

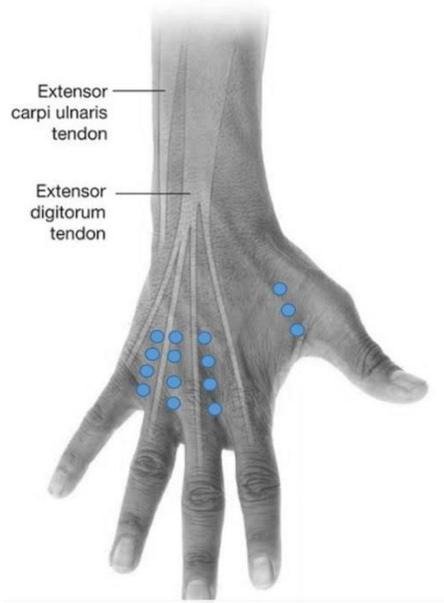


5. Always pay attention to kyo/jitsu (hypotonicity/hypertonicity) to change pressure accordingly.

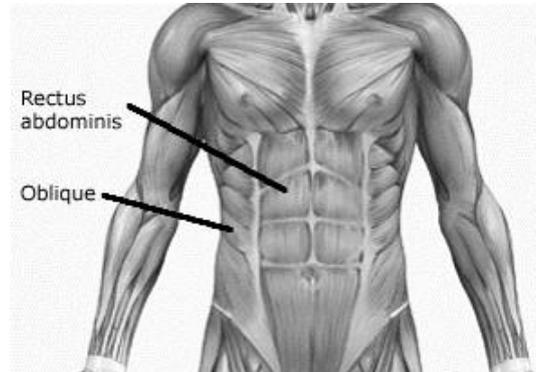
7. Prone. Important areas: upper back (interscapular lines, infraspinous fossa, medial and lateral scapular lines), lower back, sacrum and sacroiliac lines.

8. Supine. Manual back traction. Manual Neck traction (if possible)

9. Supine. Important areas: the arms, as many lines and areas as possible, intermetacarpal space (channels on the hand)

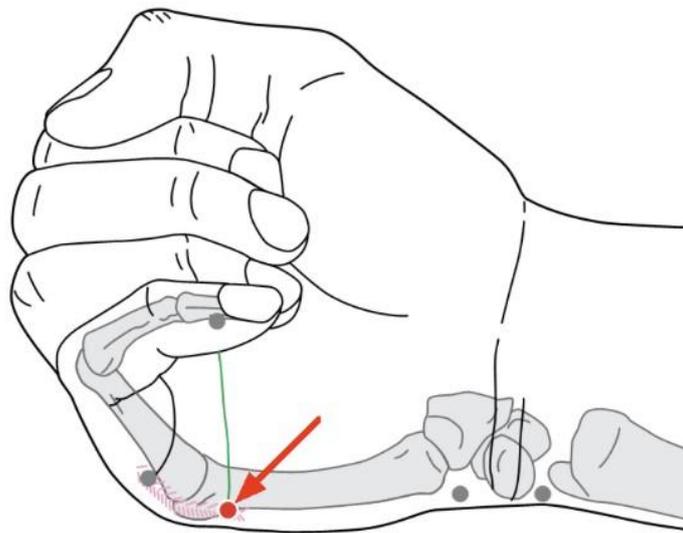


abdomen (rectus abdominis)



intermetatarsal space (channels on the feet), plantar base of toes.
Important points:

small intestine 3



10. Work the neck towards the end. Adjust your pressure so that it is not painful.
Always begin on side which is not painful.

11. Finish with suboccipital points.

POST-TREATMENT ADVICE

- 1) First and most important explain that the pain may be a bit worse the day after. This, of course, is not unique to shiatsu, it may happen with any manual therapy. They should not worry and see if the pain becomes **less** than when they came to see us two days after treatment.
- 2) Personalised sotai exercises.
- 3) Teach good sleeping position.
- 4) Ask the person to pay attention to everyday activities such as sitting at a desk, lifting, etc.

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