

**ALGORITHM
for the
MANAGEMENT of NECK PAIN**

HISTORY

Cause, duration, quality, intensity (VAS). pain drawing, altering factors, assoc features

EXAMINATION

LOOK - FEEL - MOVE
BREATHING - NEUROLOGY?

RED FLAGS

Fractures
Tumours
Radiculopathy
Radicular pain

IMAGING

X ray

MRI - only if
Neurological
changes

REFER

**MORE COMPLEX STRAINS &
the NON RESPONDER**

ANALGESICS / NSAIDS
LIGHT DUTIES / rest
CORRECT BREATHING
TREAT TRIGGER POINTS
SPECIFIC EXERCISES
PHYSIOTHERAPY
OSTEOPATHY

No improvement after six weeks,
or **WORSENING**

REASSESS

RED FLAGS
X RAY / NEUROLOGY

SPECIALIST REFERRAL

SIMPLE STRAINS

Tend to go
directly to
physiotherapy,
or osteopath

**PAIN
MANAGEMENT**
? Initial **REST**
MOBILISE
EXERCISE
Physiotherapy

RECOVER