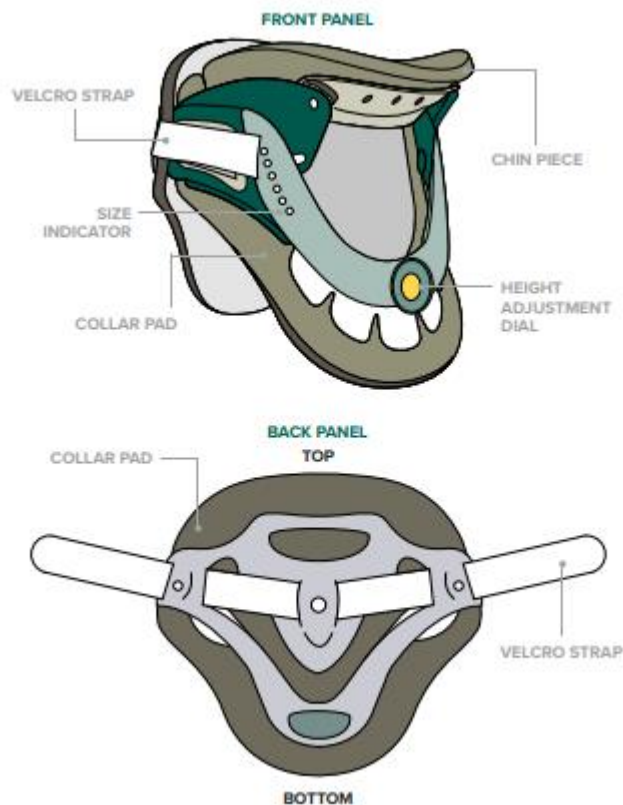


UHS RSCH ICU Spinal Prompt Cards

Aspen Vista Collar Care Guidelines

The Vista (Aspen) hard collar is a two-piece cervical collar with separate front & back pieces that fasten together with Velcro. The collar is designed to maintain alignment and restrict neck movement – this allows bones, ligaments and muscles time to heal after trauma or surgery.



COLLAR FITTING:

The collar is fitted by an expert – Neuro/Spinal Registrar or Spinal Practitioner - they should complete the collar prescription sheet & file it in the patient's notes. The collar should fit tightly enough to restrict movement (for example the patient should not be able to nod or shake their head) but it must not restrict things such as breathing or swallowing. The height adjustment dial is manipulated on the initial fitting of the collar. Once the collar is fitted there should be no need to adjust this when carrying out collar care.

If you have any concerns regarding the fit of your patient's collar please use the contact numbers found on the bottom of the collar prescription sheet.

COLLAR CARE FREQUENCY:

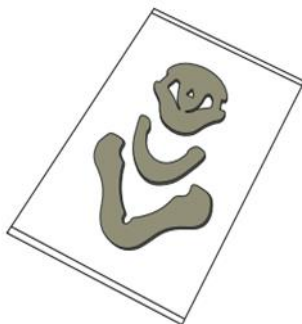
Wearing a cervical collar can cause the skin underneath to become hot and sweaty, leading to moisture damage. The collar itself puts pressure on the skin which can lead to pressure damage. Therefore it is very important that the skin is kept clean and dry. Avoid using creams and lotions or oily substances under the collar.

Guidance states that patients with a collar should receive collar care (skin washed and dried) once per shift – twice in 24 hours.

PAD CHANGE FREQUENCY:

There should be at least 2 sets of pads, one on the collar and another set that is washed and drying at the bed space. Spare pads are kept in the equipment stores. Dirty pads can be washed with soap and water only.

Air dry the pads on a flat surface at the patient's bed space.



Pads should be changed once in 24 hours if skin intact, twice in 24 hours if skin broken.

SKIN DAMAGE:

Whilst collar care is performed look for areas of redness or skin damage. Check the chin, jaw, collar bones, sternum, top of shoulders, back of head and ears.

Please **DATIX** grade 2 (or above), or moisture damage. Redness that is not blanching may be deep tissue injury & would also need a DATIX completing. Document your findings on Metavision (Trauma – Collar Care in Hygiene/Mobility tab) & in your nursing care plan.

STEPS FOR REMOVING FRONT OF COLLAR IN SUPINE POSITION:

- Patient should be laying supine (flat) without a pillow
- Experienced ICU trained nurse or member of medical team holds the patients head in alignment to prevent movement of head or neck
- Note position of Velcro straps at each side, before undoing them
- Remove front piece of collar (leaving back in situ)
- Remove pads and clean plastic areas of collar with soap and water – dry thoroughly
- Wash the skin (shave if required) – dry thoroughly
- Check the skin at the front and sides of neck and under ears
- Apply duoderm to areas of skin that look vulnerable

STEPS FOR REAPPLYING FRONT OF COLLAR IN SUPINE POSITION:

- Place clean pads onto front of collar



To reattach the pads on the front of the collar, properly align the bottom (larger) pad with the corresponding hook dots and the plastic circle component of the collar.

For the upper pad, ensure that the top piece covers the front and rear edges of the plastic components.

- Place front collar back on patient – scoop upwards from the chest underneath the chin and ensure it fits centrally and snugly with the chin near the edge of the chin rest

Position the front section

Velcro strap
mid-point
between top of
shoulder & ears



STEPS FOR REMOVING BACK OF COLLAR IN SUPINE POSITION:

- Nurse/Doctor continues holding patients head and neck in alignment
- Slide the back panel of collar sideways from underneath the patient's neck - **pushing into mattress and away to minimise any contact with patients skin** - head and neck supported throughout
- Remove old pads & clean the collar - dry thoroughly
- Wash the skin at the back of the neck and occipital area of the head – use a mirror to help if needed

STEPS FOR REAPPLYING BACK OF COLLAR IN SUPINE POSITION:

- Apply clean pads ensuring all hard areas of plastic are covered and it is positioned the right way up – **the word VISTA should be readable**



To replace the back pad, begin by attaching the green side of the pad to the hook dots on the back panel. Once the padding is aligned with the plastic, the straps will need to be re-threaded through the padding and plastic slots.

Ensure that the padding covers all the plastic components of the collar and there is no plastic touching the skin.

- Slide the back panel underneath the patients neck from the side, whilst **pushing down into the mattress** ensuring a central position
- Ensure long hair is out of the collar prior to re-attaching
- Bring the velcro straps of the back panel forward and re-attach in the same position noted before removal

Attach and tighten



- The grey pads on the back panel overlap the plastic sides of the front piece
- The straps should be the same length on both sides
- Keep head and neck hold - Ensure the collar looks in the same position as it was prior to removal with patient's chin and sternal notch in alignment
- Head hold can be only released once you are happy with alignment & fit

SPOT CHECKS FOR CORRECTLY FITTING COLLAR

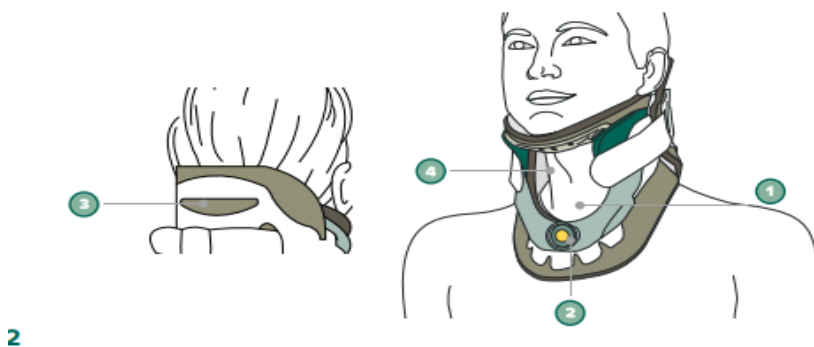
- 1 Sternal Notch Visible**

When properly positioned, the sternal notch (depression in your throat above your breast bone) should be visible through the large opening at the front of the collar.
- 2 Collar Height**

Make sure there is no gap between the chin piece and chin and between the sternum pad and chest. The chin should be supported in the chin piece with the chin pad slightly compressed.
- 3 Collar Loose**

The back panel should overlap with the front section. The collar pads should sit flush to all areas of the skin. Tighten the back panel evenly so it stays centered. If any gaps are present, tighten the collar further.
- 4 Throat Area Clear**

If the back of the chin piece is seen to be touching the throat, disconnect the Velcro on both sides and lift the sides of the front panel up and off of the shoulder muscle. This will cause the chin piece to move forward, away from the throat.



If you have any concerns regarding the fit of your patient's collar please speak to the nurse in charge and contact the Neuro/Spinal Reg or Spinal Practitioners. Their contact numbers are found on the bottom of the collar prescription sheet or spinal ward round sheet.

Guidance & images taken from Aspen Vista Collar Patient Handbook