

Mechanical traction for neck pain with or without radiculopathy (2008)

Nadine Graham, Anita Gross, Charles H Goldsmith, Jennifer Klaber Moffett, Ted Haines, Stephen J Burnie, Paul Michael J Peloso



COCHRANE BACK REVIEW GROUP
The best evidence in back and neck pain care



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Overview of the study

Objectives

- To assess the effects of mechanical traction for neck disorders

Methods

- Evidence current up to 30 March 2008
- Participants: Adult (≥ 18 years) with acute, sub-acute or chronic neck disorders*
- Intervention: Mechanical traction techniques, alone or combined with other therapies
- Outcomes measured: Pain relief, functional or disability measures (including work-related disability), return-to-work, patient satisfaction, global perceived effect, QOL

* Categorized as neck disorders with radicular symptoms including WAD Grade 3; neck disorders with headache; neck disorders including WAD Grades 1 and 2

Results & Conclusion

- Seven RCTs (958 participants) included.

| Treatment | Evidence | Quality of evidence |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|
| Continuous traction | No statistically significant difference between continuous traction and placebo traction in reducing pain or improving function | Low |
| Intermittent traction | More effective than exercise, heat and patient education for reducing pain | Low |

⇒ There is no evidence that supports or refutes the efficacy or effectiveness of either continuous or intermittent traction for neck pain