

Torticollis (Cervical Dystonia)

What is it?

- **Torticollis**– is a twisted neck in which the head is twisted to one side, while the chin is turned to the other; can also cause the head to uncomfortably tilt back or forward
 - **Most Often Affects**- middle aged women, symptoms generally begin gradually and then reach a point where they do not get any worse; there is no cure but the disorder sometimes resolves itself
 - **Reduces the Signs and Symptoms**- Botox injections into the muscles



Symptoms:

- **Symptoms**- limited range of motion, headache, head tremor, neck pain; painful in which the neck muscles contract involuntarily, causing the head to twist to one side; swelling of the neck muscles, stiffness of neck muscles

Facts:

- **Caused by**- family history of the disorder, acutely from trauma, or as an adverse reaction to medications; usually begins between ages 31 -50 years, if left untreated likely to become permanent; may be inherited due to faulty genes, develops as a result of damage to the nervous system or muscles
- **Possible Complications**- neurological symptoms due to compressed nerve roots, muscle swelling due to constant tension

What can I do?

- **See your Health Care Provider**- for more information
 - **Treatment**- physical therapy, stretching to correct the tightness, strengthening exercises to achieve muscular balance, handling to stimulate symmetry; repetitive shiatsu massage, extended heat application, chiropractic manipulation of the neck, and low-impact exercise to increase strong form neck stability
 - **Exams and Tests**- Physical examination will show a visible shortening of the neck and muscles and the head will tilt toward the affected side while the chin points to the opposite side

