

WHIPLASH INJURY PREVENTION



PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR EMPLOYEES

Did you know...?

In British Columbia alone, vehicle collisions occur at a rate of nearly 650 per day.

Whiplash is the most common injury in motor vehicle collisions, most often as a result of rear end or side impact collisions.

Whiplash causes injury to the soft tissues of the bone and spinal cord in the neck and back; these injuries are often preventable.

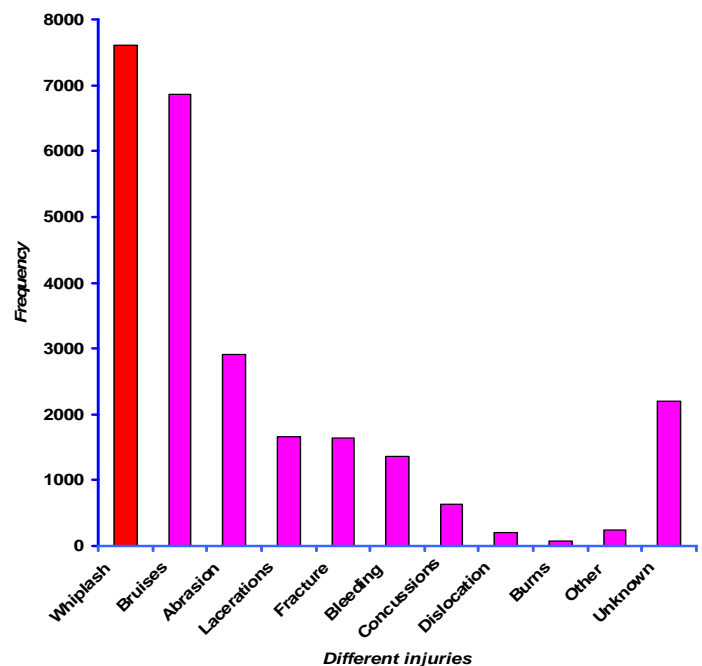
The speed at which whiplash injury occurs can be as low as 5 mph (8 km/h).

The financial cost

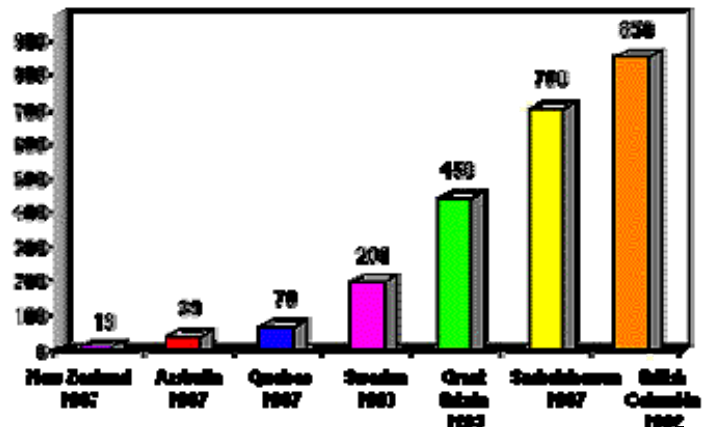
Whiplash injuries account for more than 70% of all bodily injury claims.

In Canada, whiplash injuries account for 2 million in insurance claims each year, at a cost of about **\$8.5 billion**.

ICBC estimates that, in BC alone, the economic cost exceeds \$600 million per year.



Whiplash Claims Rate per 100,000



How does whiplash injury occur?

Whiplash injuries can occur when the head and neck are rotated backward or forward relative to the body.



What are the symptoms of whiplash injury?

- Neck pain
- Headache
- Numbness
- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Sleep disturbances

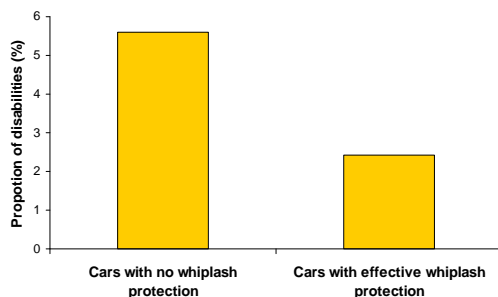


More serious injuries may result in long-term symptoms and disability.

How can whiplash be prevented?

When adjusted properly, head restraints can be very effective in preventing whiplash injuries.

- **Select a vehicle with a proper head restraint.**
- **Adjust the head restraint properly.**



In Canada, **about 86% of head restraints are adjusted incorrectly**¹.

What is the proper way to adjust head restraints?

To effectively reduce whiplash injury²:

- Raise the head restraint so the center is slightly above the top of the ear, and the top is level or above the top of the person's head.
- Position the head restraint to be as close as possible to the back of the head.
- Adjust the seat back angle into a relatively upright position. This allows the head restraint to be positioned closer to the back of the head.



A head restraint is less effective if there is a large gap between the head and the head restraint. This gap (marked in yellow) means the head can move and extend, increasing the risk of injury.



1. ICBC Statistics
2. ROSPA Statistics

Useful links

AUTO21 Whiplash Prevention Project

www.whiplashprevention.org

Insurance Institute of Highway Safety –

www.iihs.org

Insurance Corporation of BC –

www.icbc.ca

Insurance Bureau of Canada – www.ibc.ca

Thattham – www.thattham.org

We thank the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) and Canadian Chiropractic Association (CCA) for their contributions.