

## **Cervical Exercise:**

Cervical spine injuries can cause focal or generalized pain in the neck. Many pain generators in the neck (discs, facet joints, nerves) can also refer pain into the upper trapezius muscles, into the shoulder blade region, down the arm and all the way to the fingers. Some cervical pain syndromes may cause numbness and tingling. Many times, this pain is categorized as, “mechanical,” which means it can be influenced by movement conservatively. Physical therapists are trained to assess moving the neck safely with a certain force or direction and its influence of symptoms in the neck and other areas.

In addition, when patients experience a neck injury the muscles around the neck are typically inhibited and not used due to pain. This disuse muscle inhibition can lead to muscle atrophy (muscle weakness) that can further exacerbate pain and discomfort. A physical therapist can facilitate activation of this inhibited muscle tissue while maintaining healthy muscles around your neck.

Collaboration with a physical therapist is also essential to assess if you are appropriate to begin exercise and at what level.