

TJEMS Spinal Immobilization Guideline

Patient ≥ 16 years old

Full Immobilization	Modified Immobilization	Immobilization NOT required
C-collar, spider straps, head blocks on a back board	C-collar only, transport in supine position, unless not tolerated, then position of comfort	Transport in position of comfort
Multi-system blunt trauma (meets CDC triage level 1 or UVA Alpha or Beta alert criteria)	MVC, awake and alert, neck pain only, no neurologic symptoms – allow opportunity to self-extricate with C-collar only	Ambulatory at scene after fall/MVC without acute neurologic symptoms. Direct patient to stretcher.
Acutely abnormal mental status due to trauma	Facial or head trauma – not meeting alpha or beta criteria	Ground level falls with hip/lower extremity injury, NO acute neurologic symptoms or acute spine pain.
Acute neurologic symptoms due to blunt and penetrating trauma, including weakness, numbness, tingling.		Seizure and ground level fall – not meeting other criteria
Tenderness on palpation		Awake and alert after MVC, in the vehicle, with NO neurologic symptoms, should be allowed the opportunity to self-extricate. Stop if patient complains of pain that limits motion or develops neurologic symptoms.
		NO “standing take down” of ambulatory patients.

Other considerations:

- Patients should not be forced or “wrestled” into immobilization, transport in position of comfort acceptable to patient. Make the immobilization conform to the patient, not the patient to the immobilization.
- If immobilization procedures/devices worsen or cause symptoms, including pain, neurologic symptoms including numbness, weakness, tingling, or respiratory distress then discontinue procedure/device that aggravated the symptoms.
- Penetrating trauma to head, neck, torso without neurologic deficits should not be immobilized
 - Manage acute life threats and emphasize prompt transport
- Consider removing spider straps, blocks/rolls, and long back board after patient has been transferred to ED stretcher in non-priority trauma patients.