Cervical Spine Evaluation

Patient meets trauma activation criteria

Penetrating Trauma
- Remove cervical collar unless trajectory suggests direct injury to cervical spine

Blunt Trauma
- Apply NEXUS Criteria
  - Any tenderness at posterior neck midline?
  - Any focal neurologic deficit?
  - Any decreased level of alertness?
  - Any evidence of intoxication?
  - Any distracting injury?

Yes to ANY

CT C-spine without contrast

Fracture Present?

Yes
- Maintain C-collar
- Convert to Aspen or Miami J
- Work up rest of spine with CT CAP w/o contrast
- Spine consult

Neurologic deficit?
- Yes
  - STAT MRI C-spine
  - Complete spine immobilization
  - Implement SCI protocols (refer to SCI Handbook)
  - Spine recommendations

No

Obtunded?

Yes
- Continue C-collar until patient examinable
  - OR
  - MRI C-spine

No
- Continue C-collar until outpatient evaluation
  - OR
  - Adequate Flex/Ex films. Remove C-collar if negative
  - OR
  - MRI C-spine. Remove C-collar if negative

No to ALL

- C-spine cleared
- Remove collar
- Document in chart
  (Must be APP or resident having rotated >1 month on trauma to independently apply NEXUS)

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