



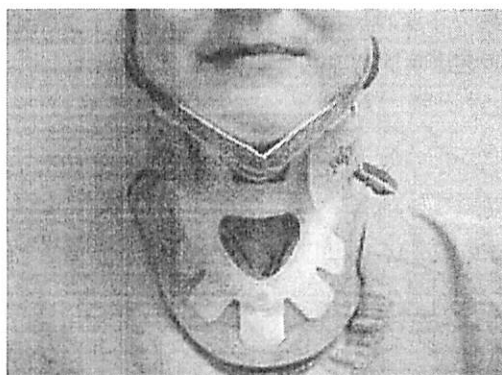
### 5.2.14 Aspen® Collar

#### **Purpose**

- To outline interventions for clients with Aspen® Collar

#### **Preamble**

The Aspen cervical collar provides support and restricts movement in the client's cervical spine. It is used for cervical injuries, cervical fractures and for surgical procedures.



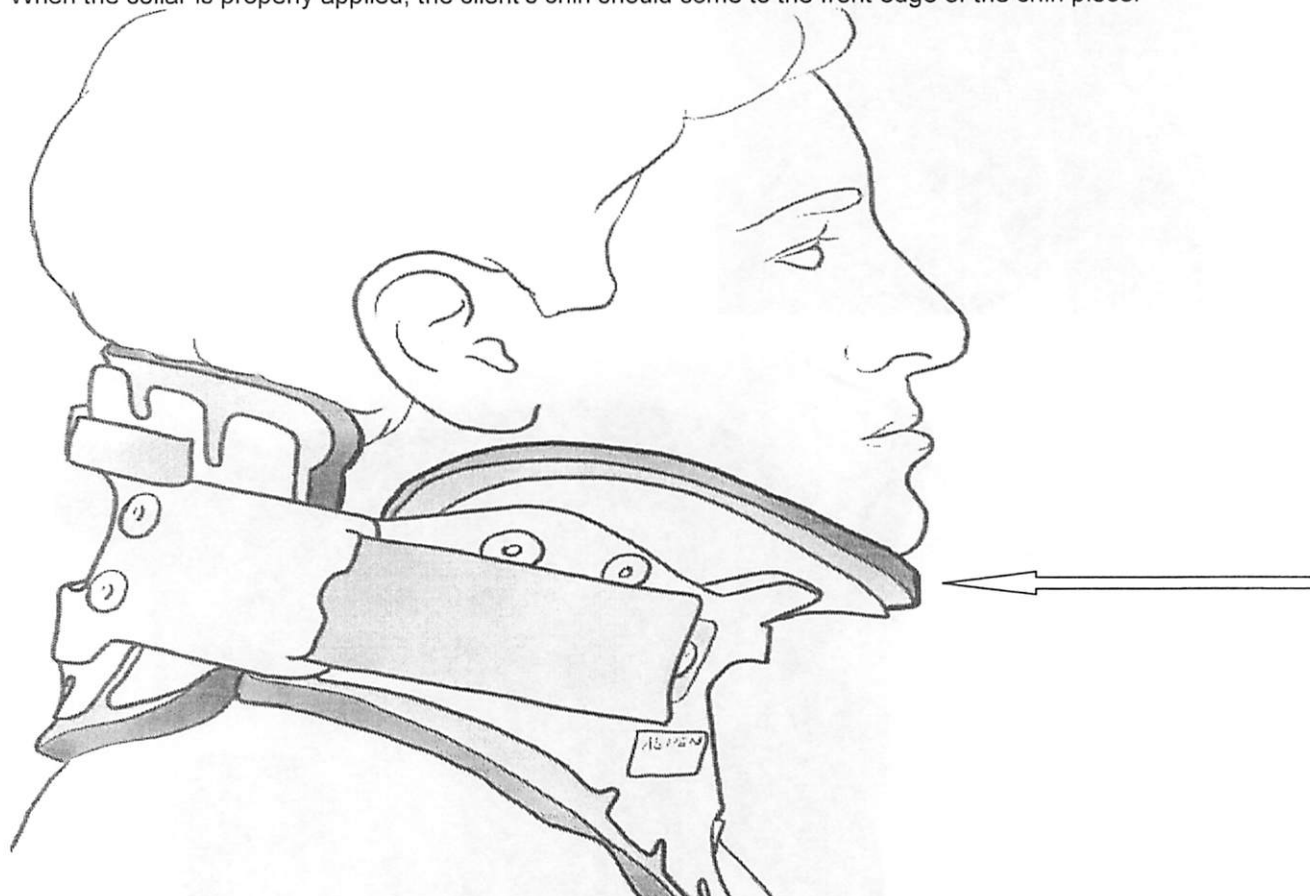


The Aspen® collar is made of plastic with front and back panels lined with padding to provide comfort and to wick perspiration away from the skin. Openings at the front and back panel allow air circulation to flow to the skin. It has an Occipital support strap as well.

There are 4 adult sizes for the collar and 2 sizes for pediatric. Sizing of the collar is done by the prescriber.

### Proper Fit of the Collar

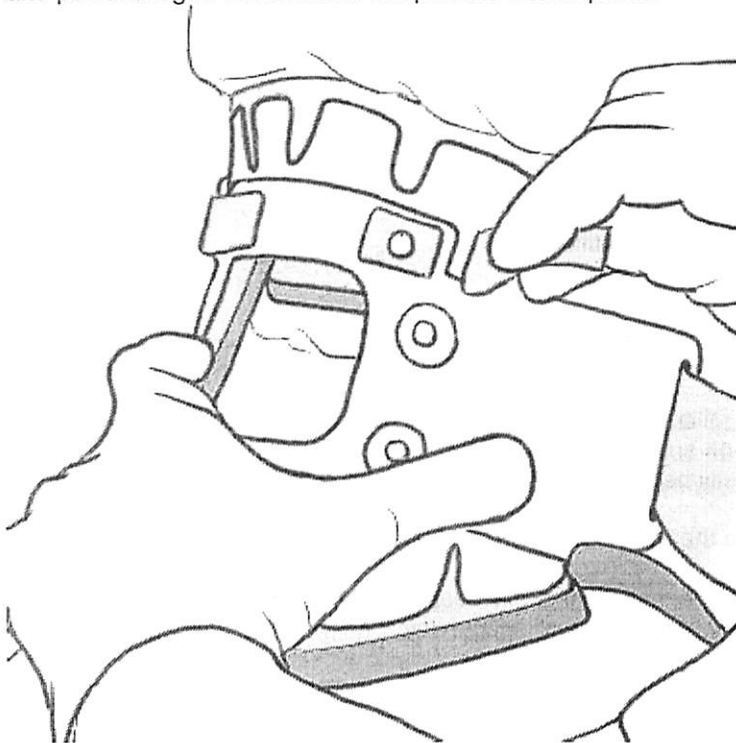
When the collar is properly applied, the client's chin should come to the front edge of the chin piece.





### Occipital Support Strap

To tighten the support strap, squeeze the back panel with one hand and loosen the strap from one side and pull until tight. Connect the strap to the Velcro patch.



### Application

- RN/LPN with specialized training
- (2) Persons are required to complete this task. One person may be a client's family member /caregiver, HCA and the second person is a nurse.
- Note: If the collar is used for comfort and not to stabilize the cervical spine, the prescriber must provide documentation indicating the collar is for comfort only. In such cases, the Hospital Based Case Coordinator **MUST consult** with Delegated Task Program to assist with determining appropriate level of Direct Service Staff and what training is required.
- Community Therapy Services (CTS) therapist will provide initial training to the nurses, using Safe Work Practice developed by WRHA OESH and CTS. Safe Work Practice must be part of the client's in home file.
- Once CTS has trained the nurses, the nurses will become the trainers if additional staff is required to provide care to the specific client.
- Skin care must be provided once a day.

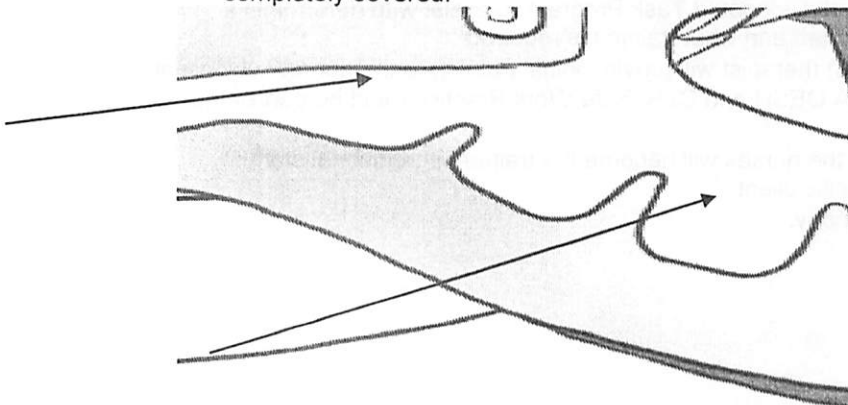


### Equipment

- Replacement pads
- Mild soap
- Basin with warm water
- Towel
- Face cloth

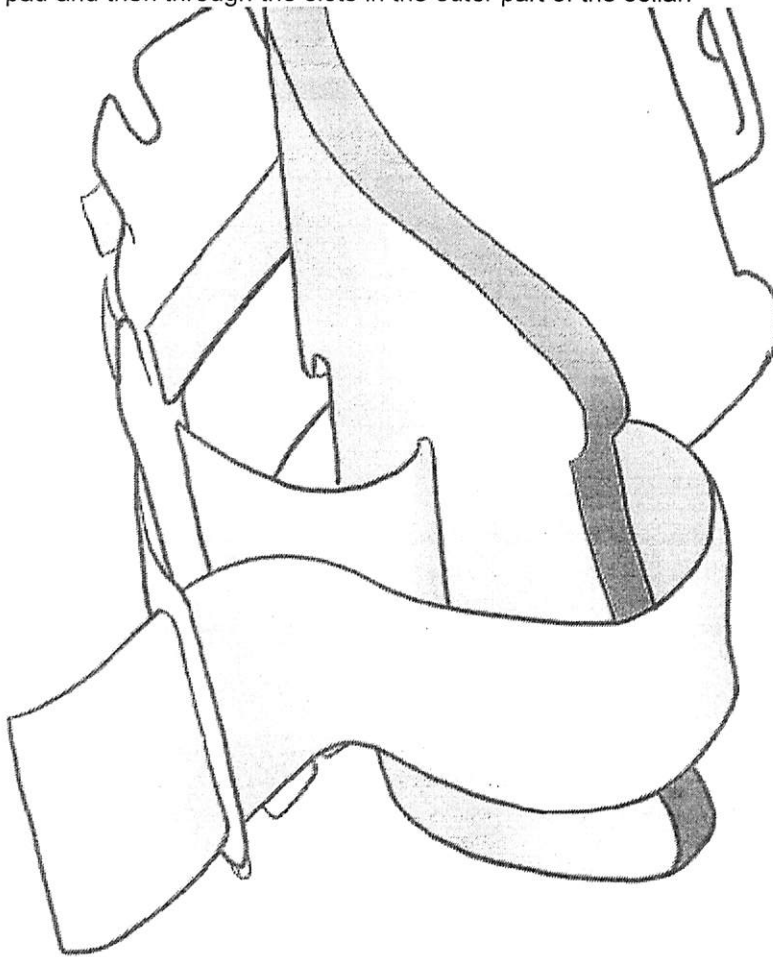
### Steps for Removal, Skin Care and Re-Application

1. Review client chart and documentation.
2. Verify client identity using at least 2 client identifiers.
3. Explain procedure and expected outcomes to client.
4. Perform hand hygiene.
5. Ensure client is in proper position as instructed by the CTS therapist.
6. View where the Velcro straps ends on the front of the collar, to assist with reapplication of the collar after skin care.
7. Discuss with second person (HCA, client's family/caregiver) the role of the person during the removal, skin care and re-application and ensure they are prepared.
8. The second person should be directly behind the client and holding the client's head in neutral alignment for steps, 8-27.
9. The first person (nurse) will release the Velcro on one side of the collar and remove the front of the collar. Set it aside.
10. Use a wash/face cloth to wash the face, neck using mild soap and water.
11. Use a second face cloth with warm water to rinse all soap away.
12. Dry area well.
13. Inspect skin to look for signs of skin breakdown /irritation. If any areas are noted, the collar may need to be adjusted. Also check to ensure that the foam pads were properly aligned and that no areas of the plastic had direct contact with the client's skin.
14. Remove the pads (chin pad and lower front pad) from the front collar by gently peeling them away from the Velcro dots that are securing them.
15. Using a clean facecloth, gently wipe the plastic front collar and dry well.
16. Replace with new /clean pads. Place the old pad to the side for washing.
17. Adjust the new /clean pad so the gray side down faces towards/ grips the Velcro dots. Note: the pad must completely cover all edges of the plastic. If not, readjust the pad so that the plastic is completely covered.





18. The plastic must not be in contact with the client's skin as this can lead to skin breakdown and pressure ulcers.
19. Place the front of the collar so the client's chin comes to the edge of the chin piece.
20. Remove the back part of the collar.
21. Use a wash/face cloth to wash the back of the neck and back.
22. Use a second face cloth with warm water to rinse all soap away.
23. Dry area well.
24. Inspect skin for areas of skin breakdown /irritation. If areas are noted, the collar may need to be readjusted.
25. Remove the back pad from the back collar by pushing the Velcro straps through the slits of the pad and then through the slots in the outer part of the collar.



26. Apply a new /clean pad to the back collar weaving the Velcro strap through the plastic slits with the gray side facing the plastic. Ensure all areas of the plastic are covered. If not, readjust the pad.
27. Reapply the back collar ensuring the support strap is at the top.
28. Connect the Velcro on both sides of the collar. Tighten the strap until it is comfortable for the client.



29. Hand wash the pads using mild soap and water. DO NOT USE A WASHER OR DRYER AS THIS WILL DESTROY THE PADS.
30. Rinse the pads well and completely remove all excess water.
31. Place pads on dry towel and allow them to completely air dry (approximately 6-8 hours) before re-using the pads.
32. Perform hand hygiene.
33. Document in client file skin assessment, pad replacement and skin care performed.

### References:

Aspen Collar Educational Video

<http://www.aspenmp.com/images/stories/videos/education-aspen-collar.mov>

Aspen Collar Patient Handbook

<http://www.aspenmp.com/images/product-downloads/aspen-collar/patient-handbook-aspen-collar.pdf>