Acceleration Of Degenerative Disc Disease Following Whiplash Injuries

“Follow-up roentgenograms taken an average of 7 years after injury in one series of patients without prior roentgenographic evidence of disc disease indicated that 39% had developed degenerative disc disease at one or more disc levels since injury.”

There was an expected incidence of 6% degenerative change in the population over this period of time.

“Thus, it appeared that the injury had started the slow process of disc degeneration.”

“In another follow-up study of patients with similar injuries but with preexisting degenerative changes in the neck, it was observed that after an average of 7 years 39% had residual symptoms, and roentgenographic evidence of new degenerative change at another level occurred in 55%.”

“Of considerable interest was the finding in both series that there was no statistical correlation between the development of degenerative changes and continued symptoms.”

The Cervical Spine

The Cervical Spine Research Society
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