

Cervical Radiculopathy

A pinched or irritated nerve in the neck — what it is and how it's managed

When pain, tingling, or numbness travels from your neck down into your arm or hand, it often comes from an irritated nerve in your neck. It can be alarming, but **it's usually manageable, and most people improve over time.**

It starts in the neck, but you feel it in the arm

Nerves that power your arms and hands begin as **nerve roots** in your neck. When one of those roots becomes irritated, usually where a disc or some normal age-related narrowing sits close to it, the nerve can send signals down its whole path. That's why the trouble starts in your neck, but you feel it in your shoulder, arm, hand, or fingers.

Why it can burn, tingle, or feel weak

An irritated nerve root does two things at once: the surrounding tissue **inflames**, and the nerve may be gently **compressed**. That combination produces the familiar mix of symptoms, sharp or burning pain, pins-and-needles, numbness, or weakness, anywhere along the nerve's path. It's the nerve reporting irritation at its root, not a sign that your arm itself is damaged.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Most people improve with non-surgical care, though recovery takes time. Because this is usually an irritated nerve rather than a damaged one, it tends to settle, but it can be gradual and up-and-down, sometimes over weeks to months. Staying active within comfort, and sticking with your plan through the ups and downs, gives you the best path forward.

How we help it settle

- **Hands-on care** to ease pressure and restore comfortable neck movement
- **Targeted exercise** to support the neck and calm the irritated nerve
- **Relieving positions** that take load off the nerve rather than stir it up
- **Activity guidance** so you stay mobile and confident while it heals



When to seek prompt medical care

Most cervical nerve irritation is not an emergency, but seek prompt care if you notice: **clumsiness in the hands** (trouble with buttons, writing, or dropping things), **changes in balance or walking**, **symptoms in both arms or in the legs**, **rapidly worsening weakness or numbness**, or symptoms following a **significant injury or fall**. These are uncommon, but worth acting on right away.

The takeaway: this is an irritated nerve in the neck, not a damaged arm. It usually settles with guided, non-surgical care, though it can take time, and we'll work through it with you.

New Market Chiropractic + Rehabilitation
164 W. Main St., Suite D, New Market, MD 21774
301-865-8333