DO NOT FORGET · THE SHORT CHECKLIST



Clearing the cervical spine

A structured clinical assessment, using validated decision rules, to decide whether a trauma patient's cervical spine can be cleared clinically or needs imaging.

EM Orbit

Patient reference	Date	Time	Completed by

The 6 steps that must not be missed

- [ ] BEFORE
Maintain spinal motion restriction or manual in-line stabilisation until the spine is cleared.

- [ ] DURING
If any high-risk factor is present, do not assess range of motion; request imaging.

- [ ] DURING
If no low-risk factor is present, do not assess range of motion; request imaging.

- [ ] DURING
Stop and restore full immobilisation if midline tenderness or a neurological deficit is found; request imaging.

- [ ] DURING
Do not passively move the neck at any stage of clearance.

- [ ] DURING
Stop immediately if the patient develops pain, paraesthesia or neurological symptoms, and re-immobilise and image.



The short list: an aid to memory, not the whole procedure. The full checklist is at the QR code. It does not replace your local protocol or your clinical judgement.