

HealthONE
Spinal Immobilization Decision Tool

Mechanism suggests need for spinal immobilization



1. **Reliable patient?**
- ↓
2. **Distracting injury absent?**
- ↓
3. **Normal neurological exam?**
- ↓
4. **Midline neck or back tenderness absent?**
- ↓
- All 4 criteria met?**



No Immobilization Required

Definitions

Mechanism of injury

- MVC/MCC/Bicycle/Equestrian accident
- Diving / Axial load
- Fall > 3 Feet
- Fall from standing – i.e. concern for elderly

Reliable patient

- No intoxication, altered LOC, acute emotional distress or language barrier precluding assessment
- Normal mentation
- Not non-verbal or pre-verbal

Distracting injury

- Sufficiently painful to distract from potential spine injury

Normal neurological exam

- No complaint of numbness, tingling or weakness
- No objective motor or sensory deficit

**This is an aid for decision making only
This is not a substitute for good clinical judgment**