Routine Skin Assessment Guidelines

Trauma Patient
with suspected or diagnosed c-spine injury

Remove extrication collar within 24 hours of admission and apply appropriately sized Miami collar. Remove sternal pad for increased comfort in the supine patient.

Elective Surgery Patient

Size and fit appropriate Miami J Collar pre-operatively.
-Instruct patient about proper application and hygiene procedures (provide Jerome literature and video).
- Instruct patient to bring collar to hospital on day of surgery.

Upon admission and at every shift, check:

Size and fit of collar OK?
-Desired treatment alignment maintained?
-Chin centered in chin piece?
-All contact edges padded?

No → Upon consent of physician:
-Change collar size if necessary, or
-Modify/Trim edges of collar as needed or
-Request review and modification by orthotist or cast tech.

Yes ↓

While partner maintains desired treatment alignment of head and neck:
-Remove anterior portion of collar (Hint: Unfasten Velcro closure on the patient's left hand side to access and release Velcro retaining strap.
-Clean and dry the anterior neck and check/change dressings as needed.
-Shave facial hair as necessary.
-Inspect chin, ears, clavicles, anterior and lateral neck and any pre-existing wounds for redness, rash or other symptom of skin breakdown.

Collar pads damp, soiled or odorous?

Yes → Remove and replace anterior pads.
-Soiled pads may be washed with soap and water and reused (on same pt.) when dry.

No ↓

Reposition anterior portion of collar under chin and reattach only the retaining strap.
-Log roll the patient onto his/her right side. This allows access to the posterior neck for cleaning and inspection while maintaining flexion support.
-Clean and dry the posterior neck and check/change dressings as needed.
-Inspect occiput, ears, posterior and lateral neck and any pre-existing wounds for redness, rash or other symptom of skin breakdown.

Collar pads damp, soiled or odorous?

Yes → Remove and replace posterior pads.
-Soiled pads may be washed with soap & water and reused (on same pt.) when dry

No ↓

Log roll patient to supine position and reattach outer Velcro closure securely to front of collar.
-Use the tracheal opening to grip the collar.

Document skin condition and collar care.

Any signs or symptoms of skin irritation or breakdown present?

Yes → To extent possible, eliminate pressure, moisture and shear forces from affected area(s).
Upon consent of physician:
-Change collar size if necessary, or
-Modify/Trim edges of collar as needed
-Or request review and modification by orthotist or cast tech.

→ Obtain ET, CNS and/or Physician consultation.

No ↓

Finished