Joint & Spine Chiropractic
Auto Accidents
Neck, Back, Joint Pain

CHALLENGE/ PROBLEM:
Proving damages when an MRI is negative.

MISTAKEN BELIEF SYSTEM: Most attorney's (both plaintiff and defense) consider MRI as the "gold standard"

WHY MRI CAN BE NEGATIVE EVEN WHEN THERE IS SEVERE INJURY:
MRI is mainly focused on the intervertebral disc.

OTHER INJURIES THAT CAN AND DO OCCUR TO THE CERVICAL SPINE
Injury to other soft tissue structures such as the alar, accessory and transverse ligaments can lead to joint **instability in the cervical spine**.

JOINT INSTABILITY CAN DRAMATICLY INCREASE VALUE OF ANY PI CASE:
While most attorneys are focused on the disc, what if the disc is normal?
The truth is that most experts agree that routine MRI investigation of post MVA patients is not justified in view of the infrequency of abnormalities detected. Thus, there is a very good chance that your client will have a "normal" MRI.[1] It has been noted that ***"IN A NEUTRAL MRI SCAN, THE CRANIO-CERVICAL JUNCTION MAY APPEAR NORMAL, EVEN THOUGH THERE'S INSTABILITY IN CERTAIN HEAD OR NECK MOVEMENTS."***

Can ligament damage and joint instability be objectively documented?
Experts agree that Bony alignment remains the gold standard for determining ligamentous integrity. **Since boney alignment is uncertain, results suggest that dynamic imaging provides more clinically relevant information than MRI.**[2]

WHAT IS DYNAMIC IMAGING:
Intervertebral instability is a relatively under diagnosed finding among patients with chronic spine is a sensitive diagnostic tool for evaluating instability, as it offers the ability to examine relative intervertebral movement over time, and across the entire continuum of voluntary movement of the patient. [3]

What are the long-term effects of cervical joint instability?
Cervical instability has the potential to cause vascular and neurological insult thus resulting in permanent injury.[4]

Can cervical joint instability be certified as a permanent injury?
YES! Cervical instability is a permanent injury as a permanent injury as defined by Section 39:6A-8 of the Automobile Cost Reduction Act of 1998.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SCAN THE QR CODE:

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[1] Voyvodic, F., Dolinis, J., Moore, V. *et al.* MRI of car occupants with whiplash injury. *Neuroradiology* **39**, 35–40 (1997). https://doi.org/10.1007/s002340050363
[2] Avila, M. J., Dumont, T. M., Ganapathy, V., & Hurlbert, R. J. (2023). Utility of MRI for Ligamentous injury in Cervical Spine Trauma: A 2-Year Consecutive Case Cohort. *World Neurosurgery*, S1878-8750.
[3] Freeman, M. D., Katz, E. A., Rosa, S. L., Gatterman, B. G., Strömmer, E. M., & Leith, W. M. (2020). Diagnostic accuracy of videofluoroscopy for symptomatic cervical spine injury following whiplash trauma. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(5), 1693.
[4] Steilen D, Hauser R, Woldin B, Sawyer S. Chronic neck pain: making the connection between capsular ligament laxity and cervical instability. Open Orthop J. 2014 Oct 1;8:326-45. doi: 10.2174/1874325001408010326. PMID: 25328557; PMCID: PMC4200875.