

CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT

Conservative treatments include physical therapy, immobilization with hard or soft cervical collars, cervical traction, massage, spinal manipulation therapy, spinal injections, and avoidance of high-risk activities.⁵ The evidence for the effectiveness of these treatments is scarce and of low quality, and outcomes can vary with individual patients.^{35,38,39} Nonsurgical treatments carry some risks. For example, spinal manipulation therapy and traction can cause ischemic neurologic complications, worsened myelopathy, and facial nerve paralysis.²⁵ Therefore, it is important to refer patients to physical therapists who are comfortable managing degenerative cervical myelopathy.