

## NECK PAIN PATTERNS

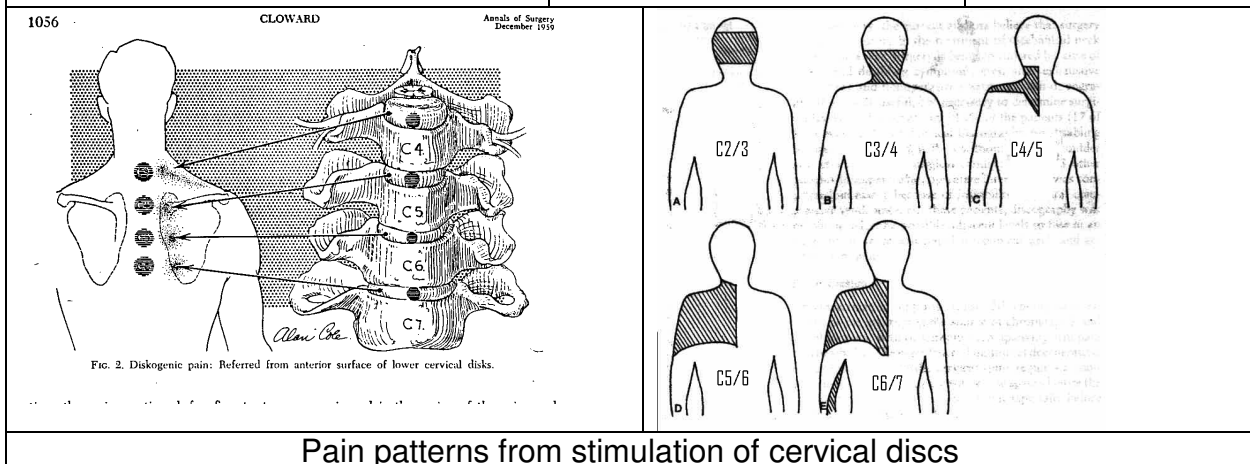
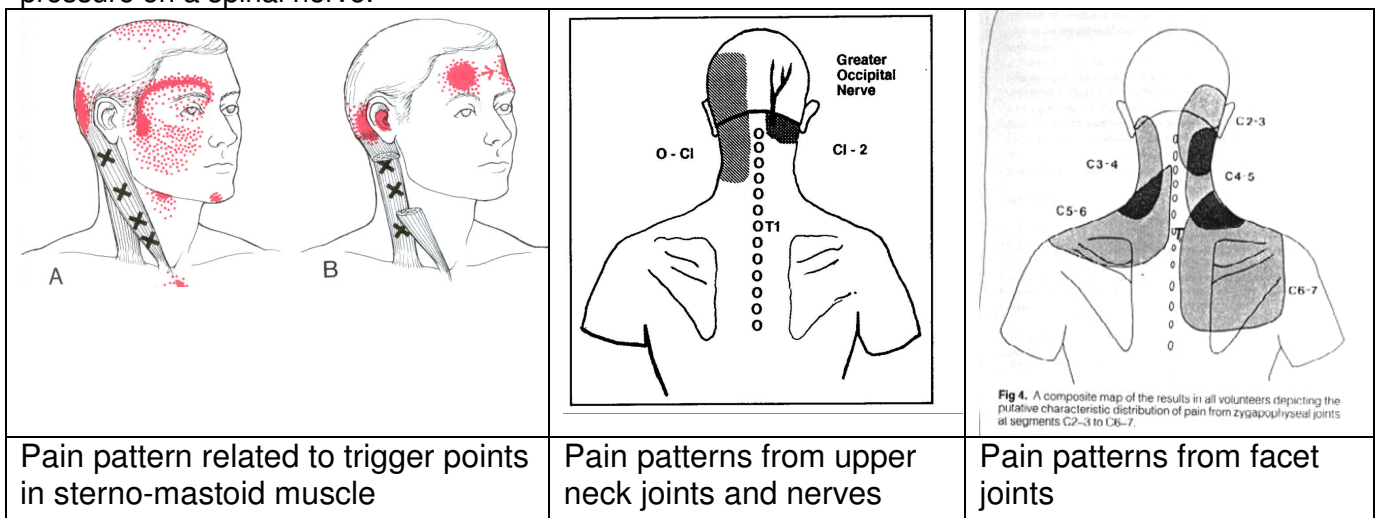
Pain originating from the neck may spread to other adjacent areas. The pain may spread up to the head, or down to the upper back, out to the shoulders and also down into the arms. Pain spreading into the arms may not necessarily be due to pinching or irritation of nerves, but may come from deeper structures in the lower neck that tend to produce a deep dull aching type of pain spreading elsewhere. The pain may spread down as far as the fingers. It often may be difficult to determine where the pain is coming from, but sometimes the pain may be reproduced by pressing on various tender spots in the neck and shoulders. Thus there are two types of referred pains; radicular (nerve irritation) and somatic.

### 1. Nerve Root Pain (Radicular Pain)

Typical nerve pain is a shooting, electric shock like pain that runs down the arm to the hand. It is often associated with pins and needles (paraesthesiae), numbness and weakness. The pain comes from a chemical inflammation of the nerve (in the neck) and does not cause local neck pain. Usually the arm pain is much more severe than the local neck or shoulder pain. Squashing or compressing a nerve initially is not painful at all, until inflammation sets in a few days later.

### 2. Somatic Referred Pain

This is the most common form of pain derived from spinal structures. Somatic referred pain is characteristically a deep, vague, diffuse pain, but it can be sharper in a well-defined area, usually in the neck or shoulder blade area. The pain is usually worse in the spine, closer to the origin of pain, and less severe in the arm. This type of pain can arise from any structure that contains a nerve supply. It can come from inside the disc, the facet joint or the muscles. It does not come from pressure on a spinal nerve.



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