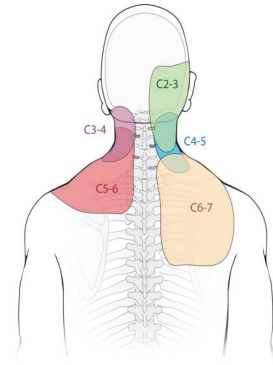


Cervical Facet Pain Pattern

- The cervical facet joints are the joints of the neck.
- Neurophysiologic studies have shown that cervical facet-joint capsules are sources of neck pain.¹
- Dwyer et al.² established pain patterns of the cervical facet joints.
 - Parasagittal cervical and cervicothoracic pain.
 - Do not/rarely cause midline cervical pain or arm pain.
 - Do not cross to the other side. Left facet joints do not cause right sided pain and vice versa.
 - Can be unilateral pain (from joints on one side of the spine) or bilateral (pain from both joints on both sides of the spine.)
- When pain is chronic or severe, the pain can extend beyond these pain patterns.
- Facet joints do not have to show degeneration on diagnostic imaging to be painful. This is usually due to a joint capsule sprain (synovitis).
- Facet joints that do show degeneration on diagnostic imaging can be either a joint capsule sprain (synovitis) or degeneration (arthrosis) or both.
- Consider that the patient may have more than one pain generator.
- Cervical facet joints limited cervical axial rotation and therefore rotation is often the most painful motion for patients with facet joint pain.³



1. Cavanaugh JM, Lu Y, Chen C, Kallakuri S. Pain generation in lumbar and cervical facet joints. *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery, American Volume*. 2006 Apr;88. Suppl 2:63-7.
2. Dwyer A, Aprill C, Bogduk N. Cervical zygapophyseal joint pain patterns. I: A study in normal volunteers. *Spine*. 1990;15(6):453-457.
3. Sizer et al, Differential Diagnosis of Local Cervical Syndrome versus Cervical Brachial Syndrome. *Pain Practice*, Volume 1, Number 1, 2001 21–35.