V-09/2003/US

KNGF-guideline Whiplash

Diagnosis

Whiplash-associated disorders (WADs)

WAD grade 1: neck symptoms
WAD grade 2: neck symptoms and musculoskeletal signs

WAD grade 3: neck symptoms and neurological signs
WAD grade 4: neck symptoms and fractures or dislocations

→ Consult referring physician

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Information provided by referring physician

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History-taking:
- nature, severity and duration of complaints;
- specific information on causative accident;
- rate of recovery since accident;
- coping strategy and Waddell's signs;
- present levels of functioning, activity and social participation (use VAS[1] and NDI[2]).

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Physical examination:
- observation of posture and overt pain behavior;
- range of local active cervical movement;
- muscular stability and proprioception.

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Analysis:
- health problems related to whiplash injury;
- time since causative accident;
- prognostic factors related to recovery;
- coping strategy;
- normal or delayed recovery.

Can patient's health problem be influenced by physiotherapy?

- Normal recovery: levels of functioning, activity, and social participation increase with time.
- Delayed recovery: levels of functioning, activity, and social participation do not increase with time or only increase slightly, and prognostic factors interfere with recovery.

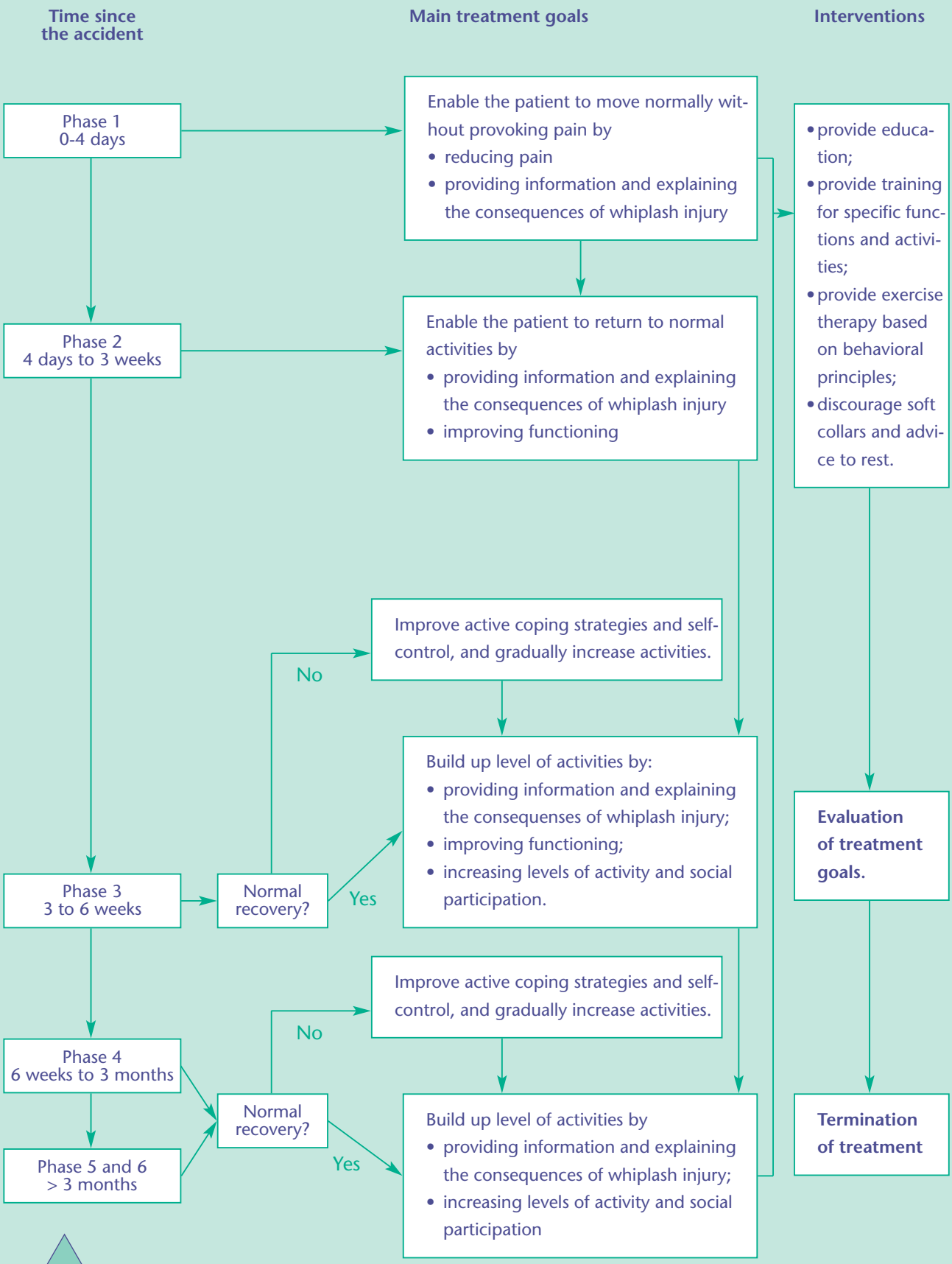
No → Consult referring physician

▼ Yes

Treatment plan:
- Normal recovery: primary goal is to improve functioning and increase levels of activity and social participation.
- Delayed recovery: primary goals are to influence factors responsible for poor progress and to improve active coping.

[1]VAS = visual analogue scale; [2]NDI = neck disability index.

Therapy



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