

# Stiff Neck: Why Can't I Move My Neck After Waking Up?

[Wellness Chinese Medicine – Dr. Cao Yafei](#)

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A stiff neck (medically known as "acute cervical muscle strain") is a common neck discomfort that usually occurs after waking up, characterized by neck stiffness, pain, and even an inability to turn the head. It results from a brief injury or spasm to the neck muscles, ligaments, or facet joints, causing acute pain and limited movement. While a stiff neck may seem like a minor issue, it can be quite inconvenient and affect daily life.

**Common Causes of a Stiff Neck:** Incorrect sleeping posture, Exposure to cold, Overuse or strain of the neck muscles, Pre-existing cervical issues or sudden movements causing strain.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) offers effective treatments for a stiff neck, which can resolve this modern discomfort through time-honored wisdom. The main treatments include:

1. **Acupuncture:** By stimulating meridians and acupoints, acupuncture helps to unblock energy flow, relieve muscle tension and spasms, and typically provides significant symptom relief after just one session.
2. **Tuina (Therapeutic Massage):** Manual techniques are used to stimulate meridians and acupoints, release muscle spasms, and correct facet joint misalignment, providing rapid treatment effects.

3. **Cupping Therapy:** Cupping promotes local blood circulation, removes cold and dampness, and alleviates muscle stiffness.
4. **Herbal External Application:** The use of herbal remedies to warm meridians, promote circulation, and reduce pain is a safe and non-invasive approach to symptom relief.

While a stiff neck may seem like a minor issue, frequent occurrences or improper treatment can have long-term effects on cervical health. If you're struggling with a stiff neck, consider trying TCM therapies to restore flexibility and health to your neck!