Neck Pain

Red flags:
- age < 20yrs
- unremitting pain
- night pain
- sensory symptoms on neck flexion
- weight loss
- systemic features

NO

Yes

Consider X-ray
FBC, ESR
Bone profile
Ig (if ESR raised)

Trauma related

NO

YES

Features to suggest cord compression:
- +/- root signs
- advancing weakness of legs
- spasticity, abnormal gait
- brisk reflexes, urine retention

The more acute the onset, the more URGENT the referral

NO

YES

Nerve root pain
(usually improves within 8/52)

NO

YES

Focal CNS signs

Simple neck pain

- analgesia
- postural advice
- encourage activity
- don't X-ray (<40yr)

No response after 2/52

No response

URGENT

Physiotherapy

Neurosurgical

Orthopaedics

NO

Physiotherapy

ESP

Chronic pain management programme