



Head Injury Information Sheet

A head injury is a knock to the head that may cause pain, cuts, swelling and/or bruising. Most head injuries are not serious but occasionally they can be and may result in trauma or damage to the brain.

A child who has had a head injury:

- Requires observation.
- observe the child carefully for the 24 hours after the head injury. - the child should be able to be easily woken at all times.
- May resume normal activity (excluding sports) as directed, usually within 2-3 days. See over for a guide on returning to sports.
- Does not routinely require a follow-up appointment.

Pain relief

If your child has mild pain give paracetamol (Panadol®, Dymadon®, Panamax®) or ibuprofen (Nurofen®) and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Emergency complications

Take your child to hospital if he or she:

- Becomes unconscious (Call an ambulance on 000).
- Becomes confused, irritable or delirious.
- Has anything that might be a convulsion, fit, turn or spasm of the face or limbs.
- Complains of a persistent headache or develops a stiff neck.
- Complains of blurred vision, seeing double or has other problems with their vision.
- Vomits frequently.
- Bleeds from the ear.

- Has a watery discharge in the ears or nose.

Follow up

Problems resulting from minor head injury can be difficult to detect. In the weeks after a head injury your child may display:

- Irritability
- Mood swings
- Tiredness
- Concentration problems
- Behavioural problems

If any of these occur or you have other concerns take your child to the GP or Emergency Department.

Returning to sport

Current evidence supports a gradual return to sport following a head injury, with a stepwise return to play. Children who return to sport too early are at risk of sustaining complications from their head injury.

Your child should have a period of physical and mental rest ("brain rest"). This includes avoiding sporting activities but also activities that require mental concentration including computer use, television, texting and playstations for 48 hours.

Once your child has been symptom free for 48 hours and feels back to normal, they can commence a gradual return to sporting activities.

If your child has persistent headaches, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, or if you have any concerns, take your child to the GP or the Emergency Department