

Discharge advice for parents and carers of children aged 5 - 12 years diagnosed with a head injury

Your child has had a minor head injury and do not need admission to hospital.

When you get home it is very unlikely that you will have any further problems. However, if you are worried or have any of the following symptoms we suggest you either phone the Emergency Department or attend the nearest Hospital Emergency Department as soon as possible.

Worrying symptoms can include:

- Very painful headache that will not go away even after painkillers
- Vomiting more than twice in the 24 hour period since the head injury
- Any confusion or getting muddled up
- Any problems understanding or speaking
- Any loss of balance or problems walking
- Any weakness in one or more arms or legs
- Any problems with vision
- Excessive drowsiness (feeling sleepy) when you would normally expect your child to be wide awake
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Clear fluid coming out of your ear or nose
- Bleeding from one or more ears
- New deafness in one or more ears

Things you should not worry about

Many children have some symptoms in the first few days after a minor head injury. These should settle over the next couple of weeks.

Common symptoms include:

- Mild headache
- Feeling sick but not vomiting
- Dizziness
- Tiredness
- Mood changes
- Problems with memory and concentration
- Reduced appetite
- Sleep disturbance

If you are concerned about any of these symptoms or they last longer than a couple of weeks, you should arrange to see your own GP.

Things that will help recovery

The following advice should help your child to get better more quickly and may help resolve any symptoms you do have.

- **DO** make sure you stay within easy reach of a telephone and medical help
- **DO** make sure they have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations
- **DO** give painkillers if they are complaining of a headache but do not exceed the recommended dose
- **DO** make sure a responsible adult stays with your child for the first 24 hours



- **DO NOT** give your child any sedatives or tranquilisers unless they are prescribed by a doctor
- **DO NOT** let your child play any contact sport (for example, rugby or football) for at least three weeks
- **DO NOT** take your child to school until you feel they have completely recovered



This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.

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