

Discharge Advice/Instructions to Parents of Children with a Head Injury

Children attending hospital following a possible head injury are assessed in the Emergency Department by the medical team. The doctor has checked your child for immediate problems and does not feel they have to stay in hospital.

Serious complications may not be obvious immediately after a head injury. Therefore, it is necessary to have careful observation by a responsible adult when discharged home. If any of the following symptoms occur, we suggest you take your child to the nearest Accident & Emergency department as soon as possible:

1. Unconsciousness or inability to awaken or arouse your child.
2. Any confusion (not knowing where they are, getting things muddled up).
3. Any drowsiness that goes on longer than 1 hour when they would normally be wide awake.
4. Any problems understanding or speaking.
5. Any loss of balance or problems walking.
6. Any weakness in one or both arms or legs.
7. Any problems with eyesight (blurred vision or seeing double), unusual eye movements, especially any change in pupil size.
8. Very painful headache that won't go away (despite giving medication).
9. Persistent vomiting.
10. Convulsions – shaking or jerking movements of arms and/or legs.
11. Clear fluid coming out of ear or nose.
12. Bleeding from one or both ears.
13. New deafness in one or both ears.

Tips to Help Your Child Recover After a Head Injury:

DO NOT leave your child alone in the house, especially for the first 48 hours after leaving the hospital.

DO NOT allow them to return to school until you feel they have completely recovered.

DO NOT let them play contact sport (for example football) for at least 3 weeks without talking to the GP first.

DO make sure that there is a telephone nearby and that you stay within easy reach in case medical help is needed.

DO ensure that they get plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations.

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