



## Information for patients, relatives and carers

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# Head Injury - Child

This advice sheet has been produced to give you general information about your child's condition. When you get home, it is very unlikely that they will have any significant problems. But if any of the following symptoms should develop, we suggest you take them to your nearest Emergency Department as soon as possible:

- Unconsciousness or lack of full consciousness
- Any confusion (not knowing where they are or getting muddled)
- Any drowsiness (feeling sleepy) for longer than an hour when they would normally be wide awake
- Difficulty waking 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 their eyesight
- Very painful headache that won't go away
- Any vomiting (being sick)
- Any fits
- Clear fluid leaking from the ear or nose
- New bleeding from one or both ears
- New deafness in one or both ears

## Things you shouldn't worry about

They may experience some other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next two weeks. These include:

- Mild headache (especially after prolonged screentime)
- Feeling sick (but not vomiting)
- Dizziness
- Irritability or bad temper
- Problems concentrating or memory problems (brain fog)
- Tiredness
- Lack of appetite
- Problems sleeping

If you feel very concerned about any of these symptoms following discharge, please contact your GP for further assessment.

**If these problems do not go away after 28 days, you should take your child to their GP.**

## Things that will help you get better

If your child follows this advice it should help them to get better more quickly and it may help any symptoms they have go away.

- ✓ **Do** have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations.
- ✓ **Do** make sure there is a nearby phone and that your child remains within easy reach of medical help.
- ✓ **Do** minimise smartphone, screen and computer use for at least the first 48 hours. Limiting screentime has been shown to improve recovery.
- ✓ **Do** give them pain killers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen if they have a headache.
- × **Do not** give them sleeping tablets or sedatives unless they are prescribed by your child's GP.
- × **Do not** allow them to play any contact sport (for example football) for at least two weeks without medical advice. They should **NOT** return to competition, training, or PE lessons within 24 hours of a suspected concussion.
- × **Do not** allow them to return to school until you feel they have completely recovered.
- × **Do not** leave your child alone at home for the first 48 hours after the injury.

## Long term problems

Most patients recover quickly from their accident and experience no long-term problems. However, some patients only develop problems after a few weeks or months. **If you start to feel that things are not quite right for your child, please contact your GP as soon as possible for further assessment.**

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① If you have further concerns about your child's condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online: <https://111.nhs.uk/> [When to use NHS 111 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/when-to-use-nhs-111/)

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [pals@york.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@york.nhs.uk)

An answer phone is available out of hours.

## Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read, or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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