



Information for patients, relatives and carers

Head Injury Adult

We think that it is safe for you to leave hospital after your head injury.

We have checked your symptoms, and you seem on the road to recovery. When you get home, it is very unlikely that you will have any further problems. However, if you develop any of the following symptoms, we suggest you attend your local Emergency Department as soon as possible:

- Vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Confusion, irritability out of character, or unusual behaviour
- Drowsiness that goes on for longer than one hour, when you would normally be wide awake
- Difficulty waking up
- New loss of memory for events before or after the injury
- Problems understanding or speaking
- Problems with your eyesight
- Loss of balance or problems walking
- Weakness in one or more arms/legs
- Decreased sensation, or pins and needles down arms/legs
- A very painful headache that does not go away with simple pain relief (such as paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- Clear fluid leaking from your ear or nose
- New bleeding from one or both ears
- Reduced neck movement or severe neck pain
- Fits (seizures)

Things you should not worry about:

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

- Mild headache
- Nausea (but no vomiting)
- Dizziness
- Mild irritability/bad temper
- Problems concentrating
- Tiredness or problems sleeping
- Lack of appetite

If you are concerned about any of these symptoms in the first few days after discharge, you should contact your GP surgery to discuss this further.

If these problems do not go away after two weeks you should go and see your GP. We would also recommend that you stop driving and seek your GP's opinion about your ability to drive.

Things that will help you get better:

If you follow this advice, you should get better quickly, and it may help any symptoms you have go away:

Do:

- ✓ Make sure you stay within easy reach of a telephone
- ✓ Have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations
- ✓ Take paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve pain or a headache
- ✓ Make sure an adult remains with you for at least the first 24 hours following your discharge
- ✓ Hold an ice pack (or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel) to the area regularly for short periods in the first few days to bring down any swelling
- ✓ Avoid stress; consider if you need to take time off work to recover

Do Not:

- ✗ Take any alcohol or drugs
- ✗ Take sleeping pills, sedatives, or tranquillisers unless they are given by a doctor
- ✗ Play any contact sport for at least three weeks without talking to your GP first
- ✗ Return to your normal activity until you feel you have completely recovered
- ✗ Drive or ride a bicycle, or operate machinery until you have completely recovered

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 right (for example: memory problems, not feeling usual self), then please contact your GP surgery as soon as possible.**

If you are struggling with concussion and your symptoms last longer than 28 days, stay out of sport and speak to your GP.

For more information, search for 'Headway Concussion Aware'.

① If you have further concerns about your 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)

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 yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

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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