

HEAD INJURY ADVICE SHEET

Symptoms of minor head injury

A minor head injury often causes a bump or bruise on the exterior of the head. Other symptoms may also include:

- nausea,
- mild headache,
- tender bruising, or mild swelling of the scalp, and
- mild dizziness.

If you, or your child, experience these mild symptoms after a knock, bump, or blow to the head, then you (or they) do not require any specific treatment.

Close observation

If your child sustained the head injury, you should observe them closely for the following 48 hours to check whether their symptoms change or worsen. If you sustained the head injury, ask a friend, or family member, to stay with you for the following 48 hours to keep an eye on you.

When to seek medical advice

Most people will make a full recovery after sustaining a minor head injury. However, if you have hurt your head, or if your child has, and you notice a change in your, or their, behaviour, or the symptoms worsen, you should seek medical assistance immediately.

If, following a knock to the head, you notice any of the symptoms listed below in either yourself, or your child, you should seek medical assistance straight away.

- A lasting headache which gets worse, or is still present, for over six hours following the injury.
- Extreme difficulty staying awake, or still being sleepy several hours after the injury.
- Two, or more, bouts of vomiting.
- Unconsciousness, either for a short, or an extended, period of time.
- Unequal pupil size.
- Straw coloured, or blood stained, fluid coming from the nose or ears. This is cerebrospinal fluid which usually surrounds the brain.
- Severe dizziness or loss of balance.
- Confusion or strange behaviour.
- Memory problems.
- Bleeding from the scalp that cannot be quickly stopped.
- Not being able to use part of the body, such as weakness in an arm, or leg.
- Difficulty seeing or double vision.
- Slurred speech.
- Unusual breathing patterns.
- Ringing, or deafness, in one ear, or both ears.
- Having a seizure or fit (when your body suddenly moves uncontrollably).

If your child sustains a minor head injury, they may cry or be distressed. This is quite normal. With attention and reassurance, most children will settle down. However, seek medical assistance if your child continues to be distressed.

Information obtained from: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Head-injury-minor/Pages/Symptoms.aspx>