

A speech bubble with a rainbow gradient border and a dark blue center containing the text 'Patient Information' in white.

Patient  
Information

# HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION ADVICE IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Your child is being discharged from hospital following a head injury. Any knock to the head is a head injury and some of these may result in concussion.

Your child has been assessed and is currently showing no signs of serious brain injury. It is unlikely when they go home they will have any further problems. However, if any of the following symptoms occur over the following three days, you should bring your child back to the nearest Emergency Department as soon as possible:



- Unconsciousness or lack of full consciousness
- Any confusion (not knowing where they are, getting muddled)
- Any drowsiness (feeling sleepy) that goes on for longer than one hour when they would normally be wide awake
- Difficulty waking the child up
- Any problems understanding or speaking
- Any loss of balance or problems walking
- Any weakness in their arms or legs
- Any problems with their eyesight
- Very painful headache that will not go away
- Vomiting (being sick), especially if severe and/or continuing
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Clear fluid or blood coming out of their ears or nose
- New deafness in one or both ears

**It is important to watch your child closely for these symptoms over the next few days. Should anyone else be caring for your child, it is advisable to show them this leaflet as well.**



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## What is concussion?

Concussion is a term used to describe a set of temporary symptoms following a bump, blow or jolt to the head. You do not have to have lost consciousness to develop concussion. Symptoms usually last a few days to a few weeks and go away on their own. These include:

- Mild to moderate headache
- Light-headedness/dizziness
- Reduced concentration
- Feeling tired
- Nausea
- Irritability
- Poor sleep

Rarely, they can take longer but we recommend if the symptoms are persisting beyond two weeks see your General Practitioner.

## Treating Concussion:

- Use regular analgesia such as paracetamol and ibuprofen
- Get plenty of rest
- Avoid screens such as computers or television

## Restarting school after concussion:

You should inform your school of the head injury. If your child is struggling to concentrate after a concussion, they may need to take a few days off school to rest and build back up to concentrating for long periods of time. You can try to build up the tasks like this:

|  |
|--|
| Daily activities at home that do not give symptoms. Start with 5-15 minutes screen time and build up |
| Start school activities at home such as homework and reading   |
| Back to school- may need to start with half days or increased breaks                                 |
| Gradually progress until they can tolerate a full day  |



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### Restarting sport:

It is recommended that all children who ride bicycles should wear a cycle helmet. This will help to protect their brain from further injury. They should not ride a bicycle until recovered. Your child should avoid all sports for the first two weeks after their head injury and we would recommend discussion with General Practitioner prior to recommencing. After this time, they can aim for a slow return to gentle activities and build back up to full contact sport. The current guidance for returning to sport is summarised as follows:

|  | Stage                   | Length  | Exercise allowed  |
|--|-------------------------|---------|---|
|  | Rest                    | 14 days | Complete brain and body rest  |
| 1  | Light exercise          | 2 days  | Up to 15 min walking, light jogging, swimming .<br>No resistance training, weight lifting or hard running   |
| 2  | Sport-specific exercise | 2 days  | Up to 45 min simple movement activity such as running drills.<br><b>No head impact activities</b>   |
| 3  | Non-contact training    | 2 days  | Up to 60 min complex training with increased intensity such as passing drills. May start resistance training.<br><b>No head impact activities</b> |
| 4  | Full contact practice   | 2 days  | Normal training activities such as tackling   |
| <b>Full return to competitive contact sport MINIMUM 22 days after concussion</b> |                         |         |   |

Each stage should then take a minimum of 48 hours and your child should only progress to the next stage if they have completed the current stage symptom free. If they develop symptoms during any of the stages go back to previous stage for a minimum of 48 hours before progressing again. If symptoms persist please contact your General Practitioner.



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**Please retain this leaflet for future reference.**

Need further advice  
Call NHS 111



### **Children's Brain Injury Trust**

Child Brain Injury Trust  
Helpline: 0303 303 2248  
[Info@CBituk.org](mailto:Info@CBituk.org)  
<https://childbraininjurytrust.org.uk>

Registered Charity No: 1113326



From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net).**

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