



Adult Head Injury Advice

You have been discharged from The Emergency Department after an impact or jolt to the head. You may have no symptoms but sometimes even minor head injuries are accompanied by symptoms. We have assessed your head injury and have found no signs of serious brain injury and you are safe to be discharged home with this accompanying information.

A responsible adult should be with you over the next 24-48 hours. Please give them this leaflet to read.

For the person looking after you:

Please check for the symptoms and signs listed below frequently. If any develop please return to the nearest emergency department.

- **A severe or painful headache that does not go away with simple painkillers like paracetamol and ibuprofen**
- **Any problems with your eyesight**
- **Vomiting (being sick), especially if persistent and/or severe**
- **Excessive sleepiness, and/or difficulty in waking for longer than one hour when you would normally be awake**
- **Confusion or any very unusual behaviour**
- **Fits**
- **Loss of consciousness**
- **Any loss of balance, limb weakness or difficulty in walking**
- **Any loss of fluid from the ears or nose (blood or clear fluid)**
- **Problems with communication, speaking or understanding**

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:



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

How do I treat Concussion?

- Use analgesia such as paracetamol and ibuprofen
- Avoid using sleeping pills, sedatives and tranquillisers unless advised by a doctor
- Get plenty of rest
- Avoid stressful situations or making important decisions
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, chocolate and cheese
- Avoid screens such as computers or television
- Do not drive or control machinery until you have recovered
- You may need a few days off work/university while symptoms settle
- Only undertake things that involve concentration for example reading for short periods 15 minutes at a time and gradually increase if you remain symptom free
- Returning to sport or vigorous activity after concussion needs to be done in a controlled way and this is described on the next page

Complications:

If concussion symptoms persist for longer than two weeks or if symptoms are very troublesome talk to your General Practitioner. A few patients develop **post-concussion syndrome** which includes longer term symptoms. Most of these symptoms settle down over time but occasionally a specialist opinion is needed and your General Practitioner can advise.



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Returning to Sport

It can be very serious to get a second head injury whilst you are still recovering from concussion. For this reason there are guidelines regarding return to contact sports and vigorous exercise.

Before starting this process, you should rest and avoid physical activity for two weeks and only return when symptom free and have returned to other normal daily activities such as work. When you are ready to return to sport this needs to be done in a step wise fashion as described in the table. Each stage should then take a minimum of 24 hours and you should only progress to the next stage if you have completed the current stage symptom free. If you develop symptoms during any of the stages go back to previous stage for a minimum of 24 hours before progressing again. If symptoms persist please contact your General Practitioner.

Stage		Length	Exercise allowed
	Rest	14 days	Complete brain and body rest
1	Light exercise	1 day	Up to 15 min walking, light jogging, swimming. No resistance training, weight lifting or hard running
2	Sport-specific exercise	1 day	Up to 45 min simple movement activity such as running drills. No head impact activities
3	Non-contact training	1 day	Up to 60 min complex training with increased intensity such as passing drills. May start resistance training. No head impact activities
4	Full contact practice	1 day	Normal training activities such as tackling
Full return to competitive contact sport MINIMUM 18 days after concussion			



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Need further advice

Call NHS 111



Headway

Helpline: 01793436908
Info@headway.org.uk
www.headway.org.uk
Registered Charity No: 1025852

Headway Swindon



the brain injury association

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.

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