

Discharge advice for carers of adults who have sustained a head injury

Introduction

This leaflet contains useful advice for the carers of a person who may have had a head injury. The person who suffered the head injury may not be aware when things are not quite right. For this reason, we recommend that this leaflet is given to someone who will be with the injured person for the next couple of days.

Although well enough to leave hospital, it is possible that they may develop new symptoms which need either observing or seeking urgent medical help.

If the person has the following symptoms take them to the nearest Emergency Department as soon as possible or call 999:

- Unconsciousness, difficult to wake up or unable to wake up when they would normally be alert
- Confusion (not knowing where they are, getting things muddled up)
- Difficulty in waking up
- Problems understanding or speaking
- Loss of balance or problems walking
- Weakness in one or more limbs (arms or legs)
- Any new problems with their eyesight
- Very painful headache that won't go away
- Continuous vomiting
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)

Symptoms to seek advice about:

- Clear fluid coming out of their ear or nose
- New bleeding from one or both ears
- New deafness in one or both ears

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Emergency

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**Patient
Information****Things you must do to make sure the person is okay**

Do not leave the person alone at home for the first 48 hours after leaving hospital.

Do make sure that there is a telephone nearby and that the person stays within easy reach of medical help.

Things you do not need to worry about

The person you are observing may have some other symptoms such as mild headaches, feeling sick (without repeatedly vomiting), dizziness, irritability or bad temper, problems concentrating or problems with their memory, tiredness, lack of appetite or problems sleeping. These symptoms may last up to 2 weeks.

To make recovery quicker make sure that the person who suffered the injury follows the advice below:

- Has plenty of rest and avoids stressful situations.
- Does not take any alcohol or drugs.
- Does not take sleeping pills, sedatives or tranquillisers unless they are given by a doctor.
- Does not play any contact sport (for example rugby or football) for at least 3 weeks without talking to their doctor first.
- Does not return to their normal college or work activities until they feel able to do so safely.
- Does not drive a car or motorbike, ride a bicycle, or operate machinery unless you feel that they have completely recovered.

If you are in doubt please contact NHS 111 for advice.

Long-term problems

Most people recover quickly from their accident and have no long-term problems. However, rarely some patients develop problems after a few weeks or months following the accident.

Patient Information

If any problems are not improving after 2 weeks, or there are any concerns about how they feel then please contact their GP as soon as possible.

For further advice, you can contact **NHS 111**.

Further information

NHS UK

www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-injury-and-concussion/

Headway

www.headway.org.uk/about-brain-injury/individuals/types-of-brain-injury/mild-head-injury-and-concussion/

FA Concussion Guidelines

www.thefa.com/get-involved/fa-concussion-guidelines-if-in-doubt-sit-them-out

England Rugby

Enter 'England Rugby concussion guidelines' in your internet search box. Select **Final Headcase Extended Guide Feb 2021** from the search results.

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