

**Patient
Information**

Mild head injury

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information and advice about the symptoms you may have following a mild head injury. Not everyone will experience symptoms such as these.

First 48 hours

Following a mild head injury it is recommended that a responsible adult remains with you for 48 hours as, although unlikely, serious complications can sometimes happen.

Most minor head injuries cause no long term damage to the brain but brain function can be temporarily affected, this is called concussion.

Causes for concern

If the affected person experiences any of the following symptoms then please seek urgent medical help by visiting your nearest Emergency Department or by calling NHS 111:

- Loss of consciousness or cannot be fully woken up
- Drowsiness when you would normally be fully awake
- Confusion
- Weakness in 1 or more arms or legs
- Any new problems with eyesight
- Continual vomiting
- A very painful headache that won't go away with pain relief such as paracetamol
- Problems understanding or speaking
- Loss of balance or problems with walking
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Bleeding from 1 or both ears
- Clear fluid running from the ears or nose
- New deafness in one or both ears

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Department

Brain Injury

Review due

November 2024

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Longer term problems

The following symptoms are common after a head injury. They do not need urgent medical attention and usually settle after a couple of weeks:

- Mild headaches
- Feeling sick without vomiting
- Dizziness or balance problems
- Tiredness and problems sleeping
- Memory or concentration problems
- Irritability or feeling low in mood
- Sensitivity to bright lights or loud noises

Everyone's recovery will be different after a head injury. The following advice can speed up recovery:

- Have plenty of rest – complete mental and physical rest for 48 hours is recommended followed by a gradual return to normal activities over a period of 2 weeks
- Avoid stressful situations or situations that need long periods of concentration
- Avoid alcohol until you feel completely better
- Do not take sleeping tablets unless you have discussed this with your GP
- Do not play any contact sport for at least 3 weeks without first checking with your doctor
- Do not drive a car, ride a motorbike or bicycle or operate machinery until you feel you have completely recovered.
- Do not return to work or studies until you feel you have completely recovered

Mild Head Injury Clinic

It is suggested that a visit to the Mild Head Injury Clinic, run by the Brain Injury Team, within a few weeks of the head injury can help to reduce the severity of any symptoms in the longer term. Most symptoms settle over time but you should discuss any concerns you have with your GP.

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Contact information

For further advice please contact the:

Gloucestershire Brain Injury Team

Tel: 0300 422 5139

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Email: ghn-tr.brain.injury@nhs.net

Further information

Headway

Website: www.headway.org.uk

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