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NHS
West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Patient information

Head injury and Concussion

Excellent patient care, together

Head Injuries are a very common childhood injury. Most are minor and result in mild bruising, swelling or wound. Some head injuries can also cause a concussion.

Caring for your child following a head injury

Following the assessment/observation of your child we are reassured that he/she appears well and you can therefore continue further observation at home.

We advise you/or a responsible adult to observe your child over the next 48 hours for any of the symptoms below and request that you to return to CED for a further review if they develop any 'Red Flag' symptoms (worrying symptoms), or you are concerned they are unwell.

• Allow your child to rest. If sleeping, check on them after an hour and then intermittently to ensure they are easily rousable. It is fine for them to go back to sleep.
• Encourage regular fluids, particularly if they do not want to eat.
• Give paracetamol or ibuprofen if they have pain (give dose as per bottle instructions).
• Your child can return to school/nursery and sports when they have fully recovered back to their usual self.



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Concussion

Concussion is a mild injury to your brain that can occur following a minor head injury. The impact to your head can lead to some of the symptoms below which ultimately resolve without intervention. Concussion commonly lasts for a few days. However, rarely some patients can continue to have these symptoms for up to three months.

Symptoms

• Headache
• Nausea
• Dizziness
• Double/blurred vision
• Short term memory loss
• Sensitivity to light or sound

• Change in sleep pattern
• Change in appetite
• Change in mood e.g. emotional

Care of your child following a concussion

• Rest
• Limit time spent watching TV and on computer
• No contact sports for three weeks (two weeks of complete rest and one week for a phased return), or longer if symptoms are ongoing
• Return to school or nursery activities when fully recovered (e.g. riding a bike, swimming)

• **Review by GP if symptoms are persisting after two weeks**

RED FLAG symptoms

• Drowsy or unable to rouse from sleep
• Three or more episodes of vomiting, at least 15 mins apart
• Altered behaviour
• Loss of concentration
• Confusion or disorientation
• Problems understanding, speaking, reading or writing
• Agitation
• Irritability (continuous crying and unable to settle with comfort or distraction)
• Severe or worsening headache
• Visual disturbance or hearing loss
• Clear fluid or blood loss from ears
• Clear fluid loss from nose
• Amnesia (memory loss)
• General weakness, problems with balance or walking
• Seizures or any abnormal movements

How to contact us

Children's Emergency Department Watford General Hospital
Vicarage Road
Watford
Hertfordshire WD18 0HB
Tel: 01923 217564 (ext: 7564)
Hospital switchboard: 01923 244366

PALS

If you need this leaflet in another **language, large print, Braille or audio version**, please call **01923 217198** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net.


Language


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Survey - Friends and Family Test

We welcome feedback about your care, this feedback is shared with all staff so that we can improve patients' experience. Click this link, scan the QR code with your smartphone or type in: bit.ly/4o3QVFJ.

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