

## Children's services - Neurosurgery

# Head Injury

Following your child's recent head injury and assessment/admission at Addenbrooke's, they are fit for discharge home. This leaflet will inform you of common symptoms, things to look out for and recovery, returning to school, other activities and craniectomy advice.

### Common Symptoms following a head injury

- Headache
- Tiredness and poor sleep
- Dizziness
- Poor concentration
- Short term memory loss
- Irritability or being easily annoyed

These are all to be expected and should improve with time. Headaches can be treated with pain killers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen.

### Things to look out for

- Severe or increasing headache
- Vomiting more than twice
- Persistent sleepiness or hard to wake
- Increasing irritability or confusion
- Double vision
- Slurred speech
- Unsteady walk

If your child complains of or displays any of these symptoms or you are worried in any way please contact: -

**(01223) 245151 Bleep 154-680 /154-173 or staff on ward D2/C3**

It is safe to allow your child to sleep, however you may be reassured by the ability to rouse them twice during the night. Do not confuse normal sleep with unconsciousness. If you find you are unable to wake your child then dial 999 for an ambulance stating you have an unconscious child following a head injury.

## Recovery

Most children do not have any long term problems following a head injury but some may develop the following:

- Altered behaviour
- Poor concentration
- Poor memory
- Excessive tiredness
- Continuing headaches

If any of these occur it is important to recognise that they may be due to the head injury and you should discuss these with your child's doctor to ensure appropriate support and management.

## Returning to school

As a parent you will know what your child is capable of doing with regard to returning to school and it is dependent on whether they have any of the common symptoms following head injury. You may find it beneficial for them to return gradually starting with a few hours then building up to a full day. It is important you raise awareness of your child's head injury with the school, particularly your child's teachers.

## Other activities

We encourage you to allow your child to return to normal activities they were doing prior to the head injury as soon as they are able. Please note, however that any activities that may increase the risk of a second head injury, such as:

- Competitive contact sports such as football
- Diving
- Climbing unsupervised above 3ft

These should be avoided where possible for at least three months following injury

**Your child should always wear a safety helmet whilst riding a bike, scooter, motorcycle or horse.**

## Further resources

[www.aboutbraininjury.org.uk](http://www.aboutbraininjury.org.uk)

### Children's Brain Injury Trust (CBIT)

Angela Beric  
Email: [Angela.beric@taylorvinters.com](mailto:Angela.beric@taylorvinters.com)  
[www.cbit-cambsbedsherts.org.uk](http://www.cbit-cambsbedsherts.org.uk)  
Tel: 01223 394986

### Brain and Spinal Injury Charity (BASIC)

Hope Hospital  
Stott Lane  
Salford M6 8HD  
Tel: 0870 750 0000

### Headway (National Head Injuries Association)

7 King Edward Court  
King Edward Street  
Nottingham NG1 1EW  
Tel: 0808 800 2244  
[www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)

### Brainwave Centre for Rehabilitation and Development

Marsh Lane  
Huntworth Gate  
Bridgewater  
Somerset TA6 6LQ  
Tel: 01278 429089

### Foundation for Conductive Education

Cannon Hill House  
Russell Road  
Moseley  
Birmingham B13 8RD  
Tel: 0121 449 1569



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

## Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

[patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)



## Document history

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