

This information should be given to a player (over 18yrs) who has sustained a head injury, or to the parent/carer of a player under 18yrs who has sustained a head injury.

We provide this information as a precaution to assist you in knowing what to look for after a head injury and is not intended to cause alarm.

The following guidance is taken from

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Concussion/#signs-and-symptoms-of-concussion> (July 2018)

Signs and symptoms of concussion

Signs of a concussion usually appear within a few minutes or hours of a head injury.

But occasionally they may not be obvious for a few days, so it's important to look out for any problems in the days following a head injury.

Treat a minor head injury at home

You don't usually need to get immediate medical advice if you only have mild symptoms that don't last long after a head injury, such as:

- a headache that goes away on its own or is relieved by painkillers
- slight dizziness
- feeling sick
- being a bit dazed

Call NHS 111 for advice if you're not sure if you need medical help.

If you don't need to go to hospital, you can usually look after yourself or your child at home.

It's normal to have symptoms such as a slight headache, or feeling sick or dazed, for up to 2 weeks.

To help recovery:

Do

- hold an ice pack (or a bag of frozen peas in a tea towel) to the injury regularly for short periods in the first few days to bring down any swelling
- rest and avoid stress – you or your child don't need to stay awake if you're tired
- take paracetamol to relieve pain or a headache – **don't use ibuprofen or aspirin** as they could cause the injury to bleed
- make sure an adult stays with you or your child for at least the first 24 hours – call 111 for advice if there's no one who can stay with you

Don't

- go back to work or school until you're feeling better
- drive until you feel you've fully recovered
- play contact sports for at least 3 weeks – children should avoid rough play for a few days
- take drugs or drink alcohol until you're feeling better
- take sleeping pills while you're recovering – unless a doctor advises you to

See a GP if:

- your or your child's symptoms last more than 2 weeks
- you're not sure if it's safe for you to drive or return to work, school or sports

When to go to hospital

Go to your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department if you've injured your head and have:

- woken up after being knocked out
- problems with your memory
- a headache that doesn't go away
- been vomiting since the injury
- changes in your behaviour, such as becoming more irritable
- had an operation on your brain in the past or are taking blood-thinners (like warfarin)
- been drinking alcohol or taking recreational drugs

In these cases, you should be checked by a health professional trained in assessing head injuries. They'll decide if you need a brain scan to rule out a serious brain injury.

When to call 999

Call 999 for an ambulance if someone has injured their head and has:

- been knocked out and hasn't woken up
- difficulty staying awake
- problems with understanding, speaking, writing, walking or balance
- numbness or weakness in part of their body
- problems with their vision
- clear fluid coming from their ears or nose
- bleeding from their ears or bruising behind one or both ears
- a black eye with no obvious damage around the eyes
- a fit (seizure)
- hit their head in a serious accident, such as a car crash

Also call for an ambulance if someone needs to go to hospital but you can't get them there safely.