

# Head injury (adult)

You have been examined and it appears that you have sustained a minor head injury. We suspect that it is alright for you to leave the Minor Injuries Unit now. We have checked your symptoms and you seem well on the road to recovery. When you get home it is very unlikely that you will have any further problems.

**However, if any of the following symptoms happen, we suggest that you attend your nearest A&E department as soon as possible, as it is outside the scope of the Minor Injury Unit:**

- Unconsciousness or lack of full consciousness (eg problems keeping eyes open).
- Any confusion (not knowing where you are, getting things muddled up).
- Vomiting (being sick) more than once.
- Headache - headaches are common after a head injury, but if severe and unrelieved by Paracetamol, you should seek further advice.
- Drowsiness (feeling sleepy) that goes on for longer than 1 hour when you would normally be wide awake.
- Any problems speaking or understanding.
- Fits or convulsions (collapsing or passing out suddenly).
- Any weakness - in one or more arms or legs.
- Any loss of balance or problems walking.
- Any problems with your eye sight- such as blurring of vision or double vision.
- Blood or clear fluid leaking from the nose or ear.
- New deafness - in one or both ears.

## **Things you shouldn't worry about:**

You may feel some other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next 2 weeks. These include a mild headache, feeling sick (without vomiting), dizziness, irritability or bad temper, problems concentrating or problems with your memory, tiredness, lack of appetite or problems sleeping. If you feel very concerned about any of these symptoms in the first few days after discharge, you should go and see your own doctor to talk about them. If these problems do not go away after 2 weeks, you should go and see your doctor. We would also recommend that you seek a doctor's opinion about your ability to drive a car or motorbike.

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## Things that will help you get better:

If you follow this advice you should get better more quickly and it may help any symptoms you have to go away:

- Do not stay at home alone for the first 24-48 hours after leaving hospital.
- Do make sure you stay within easy reach of a telephone and medical help.
- Do have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations.
- Do not take any alcohol or drugs.
- Do not take sleeping pills, sedatives or tranquilisers unless they are given by a doctor.
- Do not play any contact sport (for example, rugby or football) for at least 3 weeks without talking to your doctor first.
- Do not return to your normal school, college or work activity until you feel you have completely recovered.
- Do not drive a car, motorbike or bicycle or operate machinery unless you feel you have completely recovered.

You should take simple painkillers, such as Paracetamol for your headaches. Painkillers are more effective if taken regularly, but do not exceed the maximum daily dose and please discuss your analgesia (pain relief) options with the Clinician or Pharmacist.

## Long-term problems

Most patients recover quickly from their accident and experience no long-term problems. However, some patients only develop problems after a few weeks or months. If you start to feel that things are not quite right (for example, memory problems, not feeling yourself), then please contact your doctor as soon as possible so that they can check to make sure you are recovering properly.

You can find further support and information from the Headway website:

**[www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)**

**Please contact your GP or NHS111 for any queries or concerns.**

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact the Your Experience Team on freephone 0800 694 5530. Alternatively you can email [wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net](mailto:wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net)

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