

Emergency Department Discharge Advice



Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail pals@dchft.nhs.uk

If you wish to obtain a list of the sources used to develop this information leaflet please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk

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Head Injury (Adult)

On returning home it is important that, if possible, you are accompanied by a responsible adult. While unlikely, there is a small risk of developing complications, so if you experience any of the following symptoms in the next few days you should return to the Emergency Department as soon as possible:

- Loss of consciousness
- Increasing disorientation
- New deafness in one or both ears
- Problems understanding or speaking
- Loss of balance or problems walking
- Blurred or double vision
- Any weakness in one or both arms or legs
- Inability to be woken
- Any vomiting
- Bleeding from one or both ears
- Clear fluid coming from the ears or nose
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Drowsiness when you would normally be wide awake
- Severe headache not relieved by painkillers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen

Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Stay within reach of a telephone and medical help and a responsible adult in case of complications over the next two days
- Have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations
- Show this fact sheet to a friend or family member so they are aware of symptoms to be concerned about.
- Take painkillers such as Paracetamol for headaches
- Drink plenty of water

Don't:

- Drink alcohol until you feel better
- Take Aspirin or sleeping tablets without consulting a doctor

Please turn over:

- Return to work until you feel ready
- Play any contact sport for at least 3 weeks without consulting your doctor
- Return to driving until you feel you have recovered. If in doubt, consult your doctor

Most people recover quickly. However, you may experience some of the following symptoms over the next few days and weeks which do not require a return to hospital:

- Headaches
- Irritability
- Feelings of dizziness
- Restlessness
- Nausea
- Impulsivity and self-control problems
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Difficulties with concentration
- Sexual difficulties
- Feeling depressed, tearful or anxious
- Sleep disturbance
- Fatigue
- Memory problems
- Difficulties thinking and problem solving

In most cases these symptoms will resolve within 2 weeks. However, in some cases they may persist much longer. Try not to rush back into normal activities, as this may delay recovery. If you still have any symptoms after 2 weeks we suggest you see your GP and take this information leaflet with you. Your GP will decide whether referral to a head injury specialist such as a neurologist or neuropsychologist at Poole Hospital is required.