

Emergency Department Discharge Advice



The Information Standard Certified Member

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

Author: Nurse Practitioner
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Head Injury (Child)

It is appropriate for your child to leave hospital now. The child's symptoms have been checked and recovery should proceed without concern. When you get home, it is very unlikely that further problems will arise. However, **if any of the following symptoms occur**, you should take your child to the nearest hospital Emergency Department as soon as possible:

- Unconsciousness
- Any confusion, for example the child not knowing where either he or she is, or getting things muddled up
- Excessive sleepiness, for example still being asleep more than an hour after you would normally expect the child to be wide awake
- Difficulty waking up your child
- Any problems the child has in either understanding or speaking
- Any loss of balance or problems walking
- Any weakness in the arms or legs
- Any problems with the child's eyesight
- Very painful headache
- Any vomiting
- Any fits
- Clear fluid coming from the child's ears or nose
- Bleeding from one or both ears
- New deafness in one or both ears

Common symptoms that you need not worry about

Your child may experience some of the following over the next few days, but they should disappear in about 2 weeks or so:

- A mild headache
- Feeling sick but not vomiting
- Dizziness
- Irritability or bad temper
- Problems concentrating or problems with memory
- Tiredness
- Lack of appetite
- Problems sleeping

Please turn over:

If any of these problems do not go away after 2 weeks, then take your child to see your GP.

Things that will help your child to get better

The following will help your child to get better and help any remaining symptoms to go away more quickly:

Do:

- Give the child plenty of rest (to allow the brain to recover)
- Avoid stressful situations for your child

Do not:

- Give the child sleeping pills, sedatives or tranquillisers unless they have been prescribed for the child by a doctor
- Allow your child to play in any contact sports (such as football, hockey or rugby) before all symptoms have gone away. If you are unsure about this, you should seek the advice of your GP

Things that you must do to safeguard your child

- You must ensure that the child is not left alone in the home for the first 48 hours after leaving hospital
- Your child must not return to school before he or she has completely recovered. If after 1 week your child has not recovered then you should consult your GP
- Whilst most children recover quickly from head injury and experience no lasting difficulties, it may be that in the longer term you start to feel that things are not quite right for your child. If this becomes the case, then see your GP as soon as possible so they can check your child's condition to ensure that all is well with your child's recovery