

Adult Head Injury

You have been examined and it appears that you have sustained a minor head injury.

We think that it is all right for you to leave the hospital 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 do return, we suggest that you attend your nearest emergency department (A&E) as soon as possible:

- Unconsciousness, or lack of full consciousness (e.g. patient is difficult to rouse)
- Any confusion (not knowing where you are, getting things muddled up)
- Any drowsiness (feeling sleepy) that goes on for longer than 1 hour when you would normally be wide awake
- Any problems understanding or speaking
- Any loss of balance or problems walking
- Any weakness in one or more arms or legs
- Very severe headaches that will not go away with simple analgesia like paracetamol
- Any vomiting – being sick
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Clear fluid coming out of your ear or nose
- Bleeding from one or both ears
- New deafness in one or both ears

We suggest you follow this advice:

Do

- hold an ice pack (or a bag of frozen peas in a tea towel) to the area regularly for short periods in the first few days to bring down any swelling
- rest and avoid stress – you do not need to stay awake if you're tired
- take painkillers such as paracetamol for headaches
- make sure an adult stays with you or your child for at least the first 24 hours

Don't

- do not go back to work or school until you're feeling better
- do not drive until you feel you have fully recovered
- do not play contact sports for at least 3 weeks
- do not take drugs or drink alcohol until you're feeling better
- do not take aspirin, ibuprofen or sleeping pills while you're recovering unless a doctor advises you to
- Do not operate machinery, unless fully recovered.

Common Symptoms

You may feel unwell for a few days after a head injury. Common symptoms include:

- Mild headache
- Feeling sick (without vomiting)
- Dizziness
- Poor concentration or short term memory problems
- Irritability or bad temper
- Tiredness and difficulty sleeping
- Lack of appetite

These symptoms should disappear within two weeks without treatment.

If your symptoms last more than 2 weeks contact your GP.

- Some people suffer from **post-concussion syndrome**; after a head injury they may experience symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, difficulty concentrating, balance problems, poor memory, sensitivity to light and sleep disturbance as well as feeling 'overly emotional'. If these symptoms persist you should contact your GP.
- Other effects of a head injury that might take a while to become obvious may be because of an **injury to the pituitary gland**; symptoms can include weakness, fatigue, weight loss, low mood, loss of body hair, reduced sex drive, drinking a lot or passing urine more frequently. If these symptoms persist you should contact your GP.

Further Advice and Support

Most patients recover quickly from their head injury 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 (e.g. memory problems, or not feeling like your normal self) then please contact your GP as soon as possible to ensure you are recovering properly.

- The NHS website (www.nhs.uk) provides online health information and guidance.
- The NHS 111 phone line offers medical help and advice from trained advisors 24 hours a day. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.
- Headway is a charity that provides support to patients who have experienced a brain injury and have ongoing problems. You can find more information at: www.headway.org.uk or by scanning the QR code.



Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day. If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

For additional medical advice, if your symptoms or condition worsens:

Contact your GP

NHS 111:

Get help with your symptoms, NHS111:
Information to help you manage your health:

Telephone 111

<https://111.nhs.uk/>
www.nhs.uk

In an emergency telephone 999

Emergency Department (A&E)
Alexandra Hospital
Woodrow Drive
Redditch B98 7UB

Tel: 01527 512030

Minor Injury Unit
Kidderminster Hospital
Bewdley Road
Kidderminster DY11 6RJ

Tel: 01562 513039

Emergency Department (A&E)
Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester WR5 1DD

Tel: 01905 760743