



# Adult Head injury

Emergency Department Advice Leaflet



After assessment of your head injury it has been decided that you do not require admission for observation. However in the hours and days ahead complications can develop in a very small number of patients.

The patient should be watched carefully for the first 24 hours.

If any of the following signs appear you should either telephone your local **Emergency Department** for advice or return for further assessment.

<b>Hairmyres</b>	<b>01355 584716</b>
<b>Monklands</b>	<b>01698 752005</b>
<b>Wishaw</b>	<b>01698 366630</b>

## **THE WARNING SIGNS ARE:**

1. Increasing headache, especially if not relieved by painkillers.
2. Confusion or abnormal behaviour. This can occur at any age but tends to be more common in elderly patients and can develop in the days and weeks after their head injury.
3. Drowsiness or difficulty rousing the patient.
4. A convulsion.
5. Vomiting more than twice.
6. Bleeding or watery discharge from the nose or ears.
7. Bruising around the eyes or bruising behind the ears.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GET HOME

1. Rest. It is OK to go to sleep. Someone should check on you every few hours for the first day.
2. Eat lightly. A big meal is more likely to make you vomit.
3. Avoid alcohol and sleeping tablets as these can cause many of the warning signs.
4. Do not drive or operate machinery for 24 hours after injury.
5. If you discover when you get home that you are taking anticoagulants (blood thinners) and you have not told the doctor or nurse at the hospital you must contact the Emergency Department immediately. The most common anticoagulants are warfarin, heparin, tinzaparin, fondaparinux, enoxaparin, dalteparin, apixaban, rivaroxaban, edoxaban and dabigatran.
6. You should avoid playing contact sports for three weeks after your injury.

## THINGS NOT TO WORRY ABOUT

After a blow to the head it is not uncommon to have the following symptoms:

Mild headache

Nausea without vomiting

Trouble concentrating

Dizziness

Sleep disturbance

These symptoms can last from a few days to weeks after your head injury. If you still have symptoms after two weeks, you should contact your GP who may refer you to the Community Traumatic Brain Injury Team.

## Further information:

**Headway:** Tel No: Free phone helpline 0808 800 2244  
Website: [www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)

**NHS inform:** Website: [www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk)

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NHS Lanarkshire General Enquiry Line: 0300 30 30 243

**NHS inform** - The national health information service for Scotland.  
[www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk)  
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

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