

Head injuries in children

Information for parents and carers



HEAD INJURIES IN CHILDREN

Following a head injury, your child should be kept under observation for the next 24 hours. If you are concerned that they are developing a problem, please seek advice from any of the following:

- ❖ Your General Practitioner (GP)
- ❖ The Emergency Department

THE SIGNS THAT YOU SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR ARE:

- ❖ Increasing drowsiness or confusion (not knowing where they are, getting things muddled up, feeling very sleepy all the time)
- ❖ Persisting headaches (not relieved by paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- ❖ Vomiting (being sick)
- ❖ Weakness of one or more limbs (unable to grip equally with both hands or problems walking)
- ❖ Difficulty in seeing or hearing
- ❖ Continuous discharge or bleeding from ear, nose or mouth
- ❖ Fits (collapsing, then feeling a bit out of touch afterwards)
- ❖ Any other abnormal behaviour

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS SLEEPING YOU SHOULD CHECK THEM BEFORE YOU GO TO BED TO ENSURE:

- ❖ They are breathing normally
- ❖ They are sleeping in a normal posture
- ❖ They make the expected response when you rouse them gently, (for example, pulling up sheets, cuddling teddy bear)



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SOME EXTRA ADVICE TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET WELL:

- ✓ **DO** ensure your child gets plenty of rest and avoids noisy, boisterous play.
- ✗ **DO NOT** give your child any tranquilisers, sedatives or sleeping tablets unless prescribed by a doctor who knows your child has had a head injury.
- ✗ **DO NOT** allow your child to play any contact sports (for example, football) for at least three weeks without talking to your GP first.
- ✗ **DO NOT** allow your child to operate machinery whilst experiencing any of the above symptoms.

THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT:

Your child may feel some other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next two weeks.

These include:

- ❖ Mild headache
- ❖ Feeling sick (without vomiting)
- ❖ Dizziness
- ❖ Irritability or bad temper
- ❖ Problems concentrating or problems sleeping

If you feel concerned about any of these symptoms, or they do not go away after two weeks, you should take your child to see your GP.

Emergency Department

University Hospital Hairmyres 01355 584716

University Hospital Monklands 01698 752005

University Hospital Wishaw 01698 366630

NHS 24 111

Pub. date: May 2022

Review date: May 2024

Issue No: 05

Clinical Lead: