Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Head Injury and concussion

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Head Injury and Concussion

Urgent Treatment Centre

The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets or scan the QR code.

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Head Injury and Concussion

Most head injuries are not serious, but you should get medical help if you or your child have any symptoms after a head injury. You might have concussion (temporary brain injury) that can last a few weeks.

Urgent Advice: Go to A&E if:

- You or your child have had a head injury and have:
  - been knocked out but have now woken up
  - vomited (been sick) since the injury
  - a headache that does not go away with painkillers
  - a change in behaviour, like being more irritable or losing interest in things around you (especially in children under 5)
  - been crying more than usual (especially in babies and young children)
  - problems with memory
  - been drinking alcohol or taking drugs just before the injury
  - a blood clotting disorder (like haemophilia) or you take medicine to thin your blood
  - had brain surgery in the past
- You or your child could have concussion. Symptoms usually start within 24 hours, but sometimes may not appear for up to 3 weeks.
- You should also go to A&E if you think someone has been injured intentionally.

Immediate Action Required: Call 999 if

Someone has hit their head and has:

- been knocked out and has not woken up
- difficulty staying awake or keeping their eyes open
- a fit (seizure)
- fallen from a height more than 1 metre or 5 stairs
- problems with their vision or hearing
- a black eye without direct injury to the eye
- clear fluid coming from their ears or nose
- bleeding from their ears or bruising behind their ears
- numbness or weakness in part of their body
- problems with walking, balance, understanding, speaking or writing
- hit their head at speed, such as in a car crash, being hit by a car or bike or a diving accident
- a head wound with something inside it or a dent to the head
- Also call 999 if you cannot get someone to A&E safely.

Important: Help from NHS 111

If you're not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online. NHS 111 can tell you the right place to get help.

How to Care for a Minor Head Injury

If you have been sent home from hospital with a minor head injury, or you do not need to go to hospital, you can usually look after yourself or your child at home. You might have symptoms of concussion, such as a slight headache or feeling sick or dazed, for up to 2 weeks.

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 or your child do not need to stay awake if you're tired
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve pain or a headache
- 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 – children should avoid rough play for a few days
- do not take drugs or drink alcohol until you're feeling better
- do not take sleeping pills while you're recovering unless a doctor advises you to

Non-Urgent Advice: See a GP if:

- you or your child's symptoms last more than 2 weeks
- you're not sure if it's safe for you to drive or return to work, school or sports

Reference: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-injury-and-concussion/

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on-the-spot advice, information, and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us
Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)
The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see the patient information leaflet, Ref. Corp 006 How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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Call 111 first when it’s less urgent than 999.
Phone: 0808 802 1212
Text: 81212
www.veteransgateway.org.uk



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