

Head Injury Advice

Royal Hospital for Children & Young People
Edinburgh
Telephone: 0131 312 0012

Information for Parents and Carers

Your child/young person has attended the Emergency department following an injury to the head or face. He/She has been fully examined by a member of our team and is allowed to go home.

An adult should supervise your child/young person for the next 24 hours and they should also receive regular pain relief (for example paracetamol).

Causes for concern

Most children who receive a bump to the head, even if they have been knocked unconscious come to no harm.

The signs that you should look out for are:

- Change in behaviour from what you would expect from that time of day
- Confused (not knowing where they are or getting muddled up)
- Unusually sleepy or is hard to wake up
- Difficulty in seeing, walking, or acts clumsy or uncoordinated
- Headache not helped with painkillers
- Blood or fluid coming out of ears or nose
- Repeated vomiting - it is normal to vomit a few times
- Seizure (fit/shaking all over)

If your child/young person develops any of these symptoms or you have concerns they are not behaving normally you should return to the Emergency Department.

The vast majority of children/young people who receive this leaflet will not develop symptoms of concussion. However if not back to normal after the first 24 hours, please turn over & use the concussion guidance.

Return to normal life after concussion

Please give regular pain relief for the next 24 hours and consider giving for up to 1 week.

(For doses please follow guidance on medicine packaging)

The traffic light system below gives a step by step guide on how to manage the common symptoms of concussion. They may develop immediately after injury or within the next few days.

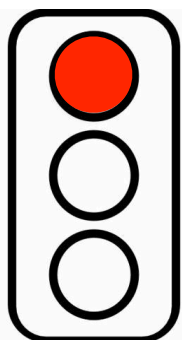
Common Symptoms of Concussion

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Feeling sick
- Poor concentration
- Poor balance/co-ordination
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Visual disturbance
- Changes in mood

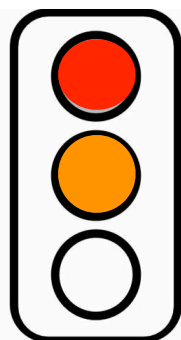
- You can move forward to the next stage when you have been symptom free for 24 hours
- If symptoms re-appear then please move back to the previous stage to help relieve symptoms
- If symptoms become worse at any point, then please contact either your GP, NHS 24 (111) or if urgent dial 999.
- If your child is still not back to normal 2 weeks following the injury please see your GP for review.

For return to contact sport we recommend a minimum of 2 weeks rest. Please read full guidance from Sport Scotland **"If in doubt, sit them out."**

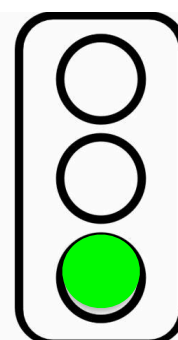
IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT.



Stop and rest both body and mind



Rest but preparing to move



Returning to normal learning activities

Ok to try

- ✓ Board games
- ✓ Short telephone conversations
- ✓ Light crafts
- ✓ Limited TV - brain breaks important

Not yet

- ✗ No screen time - phone, computer games, tablet
- ✗ No school
- ✗ No sports/ physical play
- ✗ No reading

Adult supervision at all times
Regular painkillers

If no concussion symptoms for 24 hours, then move to **amber stage**.

Ok to try

- ✓ Light reading
- ✓ Limited TV
- ✓ Short visits from friends
- ✓ 30 mins school work
- ✓ Short walks

Not yet

- ✗ No school
- ✗ Avoid computers and computer games
- ✗ No sports/ physical play

Adult supervision at all times
Painkillers as required

If no concussion symptoms for 24 hours, then move to **green stage**. If signs return, go back to **red stage**.

Ok to try

- ✓ Phased return to school eg half days
- ✓ Phased return to homework; beginning at 30mins then increasing
- ✓ Longer walks

Not yet

- ✗ No sports/ physical play for 2 weeks post injury
- ✗ No tests/ exams until full phased transition back to education

Can be left alone for short periods
Painkillers as required

Discuss with your child and agree when phased return to normality is completed. If this is taking more than 2 weeks, please see your GP.