



HEAD INJURY IN CHILDREN



THE ADELAIDE & MEATH
HOSPITAL, DUBLIN
INCORPORATING THE
NATIONAL CHILDRENS
HOSPITAL

Statement of Values
Respect - Caring - Openness
- Partnership - Teamwork

Fairness & Equality

Patient Information Leaflet

Go back to your doctor or hospital immediately if your child has:

- Unusual or confused behaviour.
- Severe or persistent headache which is not relieved by Paracetamol – (Calpol/Paralink).
- Irritability in a baby.
- Frequent Vomiting.
- Bleeding or discharge from the nose or ear.
- A fit or convulsion, or spasm of the face, arms or legs.
- Difficulty in waking up.
- Difficulty in staying awake.
- New problems with vision (blurry or double vision) or pupils (black centre of the eye) are unequal in size.
- Slurred speech.
- If you are worried for any reason.

Contact The Children's Emergency Department on :

01-4143558 or 01-4143559

Developed by Joanne Fitzpatrick
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Possible problems to watch out for in the next day or two.

Headache: Your child may have a headache, give paracetamol- (Calpol/ Paralink) every 4-6 hours as directed by your doctor. Follow instructions on the medicine bottle as well.

Vomiting: Your child may have vomited once but if vomiting continues, **go back to your doctor immediately.**

Drowsiness: Immediately after a head injury your child may be sleepy. There is no need to keep your child awake if he/she wants to sleep. However wake him/her every 30-60 minutes to check their condition and their reaction to familiar people and things.

If you have difficulty waking your child, go to the nearest emergency department or call an ambulance

HEAD INJURY

Head injuries are common in childhood and are usually not a serious problem. Most head injuries are caused by a blow to the head which may happen because of a fall, a car accident or a sports injury.

Seek medical help immediately if:

- Your child has had a hard bang to the head, such as falling off some thing high or from a car accident.
- Your child losses consciousness.
- Your child seems unwell and vomits several times after a bang to the head.

Signs and symptoms

The symptoms of head injuries are used to determine how serious it is. Head injuries can be classified into minor, moderate or severe.



A minor head injury is when your child:

- Has not lost consciousness.
- Is alert or interacts with you.
- May have vomited, but only once.
- May have bruising or cuts on their head.
- Otherwise normal

Your child should be watched closely for signs of more serious problems following a minor head injury.

A moderate head injury is when your child:

- Has lost consciousness for less than 30 seconds.
- Is alert and responds to your voice.
- Has vomited two times or more.
- Has a headache.
- One brief fit may have happened straight after the injury.
- May have a large bruise, lump or cut in the head.

Your child should be watched closely in hospital for at least 4 hours after a moderate head injury.

A severe head injury is when your child:

- Has lost consciousness for more than 30 seconds.
- Is drowsy and does not respond to your voice.
- Has other significant head injury signs, such as unequal pupils, arm and leg weakness
- Has a second fit or convulsion. other than a single brief one when the injury happened.

You should call an ambulance immediately if your child has a severe head injury.

