



FIRST AID MEDICAL SERVICES

# Head Injury – Advice Sheet

PRF No.

NAME:

DATE:

The above person has sustained a potential head injury today and has been assessed by a first aider or medic. We recommend you follow NHS advice available online:

**[www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-injury-and-concussion](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-injury-and-concussion)**

Most head injuries are not serious; people do not usually need to go to hospital and normally make a full recovery within 2 weeks. However, occasionally problems can occur. If you have any concerns about the health or welfare of the above person, please seek medical advice without delay by phoning NHS 111, taking the person to A&E, or (in an emergency) by calling 999.

## Go to A&E if:

The person has suffered a head injury and has:

- been knocked out but has now woken up
- 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 them (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 has taken medicine (such as warfarin) to thin their blood
- had brain surgery in the past

Symptoms for concussion usually start within 24 hours, but sometimes may not appear for up to three weeks.

## 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 of 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

## How to care for a minor head injury

If someone has been sent home from hospital with a minor head injury, or they did not need to go to hospital, they can usually be looked after at home. They may have symptoms of concussion, such as a slight headache or feeling sick or dazed, for up to 2 weeks. The NHS advice below may be followed by the person with a minor head injury:

### DO:

- hold an ice pack to the area regularly for short periods in the first few days to bring down any swelling
- rest and avoid stress
- take painkillers such as paracetamol for headaches
- make sure an adult stays with you for at least the first 24 hours

### DO NOT:

- go back to work or school until you're feeling better
- drive until you feel you have fully recovered
- play contact sports for at least 3 weeks – children should also avoid 'rough' play for a few days
- take drugs or drink alcohol until you're feeling better
- take sleeping pills while you're recovering unless a doctor advises you to

## Non-urgent advice: See a GP if:

- symptoms last more than 2 weeks
- the person is not sure if it's safe to drive or return to work, school or sports

The above advice is given in accordance with NHS guidance as of September 2024. Please visit the NHS website for up-to-date advice.