

## Head injury – CHILD

Following a head injury it is important to keep a close eye on your child for up to 48 hours. Watch for the following symptoms and if any of them do occur contact us at once.

- **Drowsiness** – Your child may be quite sleepy following a head injury; this is quite a normal reaction to having a bump on the head. It is important to let your child sleep but check that they are rousable. You need to gently shake their shoulder: a sleepy child will respond by moving slightly or murmuring, an unconscious child will not.
- **Headaches** – Your child may complain of a headache; this is quite usual. You should give liquid paracetamol (Calpol). If the headache is severe and not relieved by medicine, you should contact the doctor.  
Do not give stronger painkillers.
- **Vomiting** – Your child may have vomited immediately after they bumped their head and this is quite usual. However, frequent vomiting that starts several hours following the injury is more serious and you should contact your doctor for advice.
- **Loss of balance** – This may be associated with vomiting. In a young child it may be detected by them not wanting to move and staying in the same position, from which moving them may make them vomit. You may notice that they are unsteady on their feet.
- **Blurred vision** – This is harder to notice in younger children but in older children this may also be linked to dizziness and vomiting. In younger children you may notice they are reaching for toys but not able to coordinate to pick them up.
- **A convulsion, seizure or fit** – This is a rare complication following a head injury. If your child has a fit you should ring for an ambulance immediately.

Things you shouldn't worry about – Your child may feel other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next 2 weeks. These could include:

- A mild headache
- Feeling sick without being sick (vomiting)
- Being irritable and grumpy
- Tiredness
- Poor appetite
- Some difficulty concentrating
- Problems sleeping

If you feel very concerned about any of the symptoms please call the doctor.

### **General**

- Your doctor or nurse will advise you how to keep them off school; this can be up to 48 hours after the head injury
- Please do not let your child play any contact sport for at least a week after the head injury
- It is not usually necessary for your child to be followed up after a head injury but if you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **Check list**

Please contact **999** if your child has any of the following:

- Is drowsy or difficult to wake up (and it is not their normal bedtime)
- Blurred or double vision
- A severe headache (not relieved by paracetamol)
- Behaviour or mood changes
- Vomits more than 3 or 4 times