



Head Injury

Advice for parents
and carers

**Royal Hospital for Children and Young People,
50 Little France Crescent
Edinburgh
EH16 4TJ**

Introduction

Your child has attended the Accident and Emergency Department following an injury to the head or face region. He or she has been fully examined by a member of the medical staff and is allowed to go home.

Causes for concern

Most children who receive a bump on the head, even if they have been knocked unconscious, come to no harm. However the danger signs that you should look for are:

1. Your child's behaviour is different to what you would expect for the time of day.
2. Bleeding from the ears or nose.
3. Watery discharge from the ear or nose.

Usually discharge or bleeding from the ear and nose will be noticed before the child leaves hospital but occasionally the symptoms appear later on at home. It may be difficult to tell the difference between an abnormal discharge and a simple runny nose. If you are unsure, or have any concerns, please return to the Accident and Emergency department.

Headaches

It is common for children to get headaches for three to four days after a head injury. These are of no particular concern, unless the child is behaving in a confused or strange manner, in which case he/she should be brought back to A&E.

If your child has pain, paracetamol (such as Calpol®) can be given in the doses stated on the bottle.

Vomiting

Similarly, vomiting is common after a head injury particularly in small children. We would not be particularly concerned about a child who vomits once or twice.

If, however, the vomiting becomes persistent this may cause your child to become dehydrated. In this case the child must be brought back to A&E as he/she may require hospital admission.

Follow up

Most children who leave the Accident and Emergency Department will not require to be seen again. Some children who have been knocked unconscious may be pale and listless for a short time after the injury. This is to be expected and is related to the severity of the original injury. Such children may take some time to return to normal and will be observed in the A&E Department until we are happy to allow the child home.

If after discharge there is any concern about your child please contact the A&E Department.

Should you have any questions arising from this leaflet, or have any other worries relating to head injuries, you can call us on: **0131 312 0007/0008**.