



Mild head injury and concussion

You came to the emergency department after a head injury. The doctor checked you and decided it is safe for you to go home. This sheet explains how to recover and which warning signs mean you must come back.

What is it?

A concussion is a mild brain injury caused by a knock to the head or a sudden jolt. You may have a headache, dizziness, tiredness, feeling sick, poor concentration, blurred vision, or feel irritable or low. These symptoms usually improve over a few days to two weeks. Sometimes they last longer. Most people recover fully.

Looking after yourself at home

- Have a responsible adult stay with you for the first 24 hours, and make sure you can easily reach help.
- Rest your body and brain for the first 1–2 days. Limit screens, reading and noisy places if they make symptoms worse.
- After that, slowly return to normal daily activities. Take breaks if your symptoms come back.
- Do not drink alcohol or take sleeping tablets or recreational drugs until you have fully recovered.
- Do not drive until you feel completely well. Ask your doctor before returning to driving.
- Do not play contact sport until symptoms have gone and a doctor says it is safe. Return to school or work gradually.

Medicines

- Paracetamol can help with headache, unless your doctor told you not to. Follow the packet or your doctor's instructions.
- Ask your doctor before taking ibuprofen or aspirin, especially in the first day or if you take blood thinners.

Follow-up

- See your family doctor or health centre if your symptoms are not improving after 1–2 weeks.
- See your doctor before returning to sport, and sooner if headaches, memory problems or mood changes worry you.

Come back to the emergency department or call an ambulance straight away if:

- A headache that is getting worse, or is very severe
- Vomiting more than once
- Becoming very drowsy, hard to wake, or confused
- A seizure (fit), or passing out
- Weakness or numbness in an arm or leg, trouble speaking or walking, or double vision
- Clear fluid or blood coming from the nose or ears
- Behaving strangely, or being unusually agitated or irritable



Scan to read this sheet on your phone

This leaflet is general information to support the advice your doctor or nurse gave you today. It does not replace their advice. If you are worried, seek medical help.

EM Orbit · Emergency medicine, in one orbit · concussion-en