

# Head Injury Advice Sheet for Children



**RED**

If your child has any one of these below:

- Has been “knocked out” at any time
- Been sick more than once
- Has clear fluid coming out of their ears, nose or both
- Has blood coming from inside one or both of their ears
- Has difficulty speaking or understanding what you are saying
- Is sleepy and you cannot get them to wake up
- Has weakness in their arms and legs or is losing their balance
- Has had a convulsion or fit



## You need EMERGENCY help

Call **999** or go straight to the nearest Hospital Emergency (A&E) Department

**Nearest Hospitals (open 24 hours 7 days a week):**

- Milton Keynes Hospital
- John Radcliffe, Oxford
- Luton and Dunstable Hospital
- Bedford Hospital
- Northampton Hospital
- Stoke Mandeville Hospital



**AMBER**

If your child has any one of these below:

- Has been hurt on purpose (abused)
- Has fallen from a height that is taller than the child
- Has fallen from a height that is more than one meter
- Is under 1 year old
- Has fallen down stairs (from top to bottom is worse than bumping down the stairs)
- Had a headache since the injury
- Has a blood clotting disorder
- Has drunk alcohol



## You need to contact a nurse or doctor today

Please ring your GP surgery or health visitor during the day or when your GP surgery is closed please call **NHS 111**



**GREEN**

If your child:

- Has not been “knocked out” at any time
- Is alert and interacts with you
- Has only been sick once
- Has bruising or small cuts to the head



## Self care

Using the advice on this leaflet you can care for your child at home.

If you feel you need advice please contact your local Health Visitor or GP surgery or your local pharmacy (follow the links at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

You can also call **NHS 111**

Name of child ..... Age .....

Date / time advice given .....

Name of health professional (PRINT) .....

Signature of health professional .....

Further advice / follow-up.....

.....

.....

### Some useful telephone numbers:

GP / Practice nurse (patient to complete) .....

Health visitor (patient to complete) .....

If out of hours, please call 111.

## **Things that will help your child get better**

If you follow this advice it should help your child get better more quickly and it may help any symptoms they have to go away.

- Do encourage your child to have plenty of rest and avoid stressful places.
- Do not give them medicines that make them drowsy unless they are prescribed for your child by a doctor.

## **Self-Care**

- Clean any cuts with tap water.
- If the area is swollen or bleeding apply pressure.
- Give children's liquid paracetamol or ibuprofen if they are in pain. Always follow the advice on the pack for the correct dose.
- Watch your child closely for the next 2-3 days. Check that they are behaving normally and they respond to you as usual.
- If the area is swollen or bruised, try placing a cold facecloth over it for 20 minutes every 3-4 hours.
- Make sure your child is drinking enough fluid – water is best. Lukewarm drinks can also be soothing.
- Keep the room they are in at a comfortable temperature, but well aired.
- It is OK to allow your child to sleep, but check them regularly. Check they respond normally to touch and that their breathing and position in bed is normal.
- Give them plenty of rest. Make sure they avoid any difficult activity for the next 2-3 days or until their symptoms have settled.
- You know your child best. If you are worried about them you should seek further advice.

## **These things are expected after a head injury**

- Headaches every now and then, especially whilst watching TV or computer games
- Being off their food
- Tiredness or trouble getting to sleep
- Short periods of being moody, bad temper or poor concentration

## **May last several weeks.**

Do not let them play any contact sport (for example, football) for at least 3 weeks without talking to their doctor first.