



Minor head injury discharge advice - Adults

On returning home it is important that, if possible, you are accompanied by a responsible adult. While unlikely, there is a small risk of developing complications, so if you experience any of the following symptoms in the next few days or weeks you should return to the Emergency Department immediately.

- Loss of consciousness
- New deafness in one or both ears
- Loss of balance or problems walking
- Any weakness in one or both arms or legs
- Any vomiting
- Clear fluid coming out of your ears or nose
- Drowsiness when you would normally be wide awake
- Increasing disorientation
- Problems understanding or speaking
- Blurred or double vision
- Inability to be woken
- Bleeding from one or both ears
- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Severe headache not relieved by painkillers such as paracetamol

Dos and Don'ts

DO make sure you stay within reach of a telephone and medical help in the next few days

DO have plenty of rest and avoid stressful situations

DO show this factsheet to a friend or family member who can keep an eye on your condition

DO take painkillers such as paracetamol for headaches

DON'T stay at home alone for 48 hours after leaving hospital

DON'T drink alcohol until you feel better

DON'T take aspirin or sleeping tablets without consulting a doctor

DON'T return to work until you feel ready

DON'T play or train for any contact sport for at least three weeks without consulting your doctor

DON'T return to driving until you feel you have recovered. If in doubt consult your doctor.

Most people recover quickly. However, you may experience some of the following symptoms over the next few days and weeks, which don't require a return to hospital.

- Headaches
- Feelings of dizziness
- Nausea
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Sexual difficulties
- Sleep disturbance
- Memory problems
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Impulsivity and self-control problems
- Difficulties with concentration
- Feeling depressed, tearful or anxious
- Fatigue
- Difficulties thinking and problem-solving

In most cases these symptoms will resolve themselves within a few days or weeks. However, in a minority of cases they may persist much longer, but still resolve themselves eventually. Try not to rush back into normal activities, as this may delay recovery. If you still have any symptoms after two weeks we suggest you see your GP and take this factsheet with you. It may be possible to seek referral to a head injury specialist such as a neurologist or neuropsychologist.

This factsheet should not replace a clinical examination. If you have not been examined then contact your GP, call NHS 111 (England and Wales) or NHS 24 (Scotland).

For further information, support and contact details of local Groups and Branches, contact the Headway helpline on 0808 800 2244 or helpline@headway.org.uk.