

What is this card for?

Head injuries can be serious. Sometimes, symptoms do not develop immediately. Delayed brain bleeding and swelling may not cause problems for hours, even days! Some symptoms following a head injury are expected; some are not and may indicate a problem. This card will help you know when to seek medical attention.



What can I expect?

It is normal to experience temporary symptoms:

- Mild headache (relief with simple painkillers)
- Mild anorexia (lack of appetite) & nausea
- Mild dizziness
- Impaired concentration & memory

My head hurts!

A headache is normal after a head injury. It should improve with simple painkillers and rest. If there is scalp swelling, apply a cold compress. Increasing headache is a warning sign and you must seek advice if this persists (See below).

What must I do?

MONITOR for warning symptoms & signs (See below)

AVOID alcohol & sedative drugs

DO NOT drive or operate heavy machinery

AVOID a repeat head injury

DO NOT go home alone & ensure a responsible adult is present



Warning!!

- Increasing headache not relieved with simple painkillers
- Persistent vomiting
- Drowsiness & Confusion
- Seizures/ Funny turns
- Stumbling/ Difficulty walking
- Slurred speech/ Double vision
- Unexplained loss of clear fluid/ blood from Nose/Ear



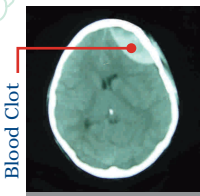
Concerned!! Please Call 

or Return for attention!

Contact your local doctor who will receive information regarding your visit.



What can happen?



Blood Clot

Fig. 1

Sometimes, symptoms do not develop immediately. For example; Fig. 1 is the head scan of a 12-year-old girl. She is a keen hockey player and suffered a hockey ball impact to her temple. Following this she was conscious and felt pain in the temple but was otherwise OK.

However, she developed progressive headache with nausea and vomiting. The scan revealed a large blood clot under the skull which was expanding and squashing her brain. This is called an Extradural Haematoma.

She required urgent surgery. A craniotomy (skull opening) was performed with removal of the blood clot and the bleeding was stopped. After surgery, A scan (Fig 2) showed complete removal of the blood clot and a much more relaxed brain. She was able to smile despite the trauma of the whole event (Fig 3).

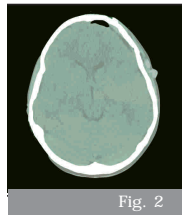


Fig. 2

Thankfully, the bleeding was detected before it caused irreversible brain damage. The face and eye swelling has now resolved and she has made a good recovery.



Fig. 3

These events are not common but they do happen! Head injuries are potentially serious but most complications, detected early, can be treated before they cause irreversible damage.

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