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Minor head injuries are common, particularly in children

Things that will help your child get better

- **Do** encourage your child to have plenty of rest and encourage quiet activity. It is not dangerous to sleep after a minor head injury (especially if it is nap time), although you should monitor your child. It is not usually necessary to wake them from sleep but on waking they should be able to wake up immediately and recognise their surroundings/carer.

- **Do not** force them to eat but make sure they have enough to drink and offer a light diet.

- **Do** give paracetamol for headache.

- **Swelling** (a large lump or ‘goose egg’) is also common after a head injury. To reduce swelling, an ice or cold pack can be applied to the area for 20 minutes. Swelling usually begins to improve within a few hours but may take a week to completely resolve.

- **Avoid** contact sport (also discourage ‘rough and tumble’ play for the next few days).

Things you shouldn’t worry about

Your child may feel some other symptoms over the next few days, which should disappear in the next two weeks. These include a mild headache, feeling sick (without vomiting), dizziness, irritability or bad temper, problems concentrating or problems with their memory, tiredness, lack of appetite or problems sleeping.

Call your GP

Most children recover quickly from their accident and experience no long-term problems.

If symptoms continue for more than two weeks or you feel worried about any particular symptoms you should contact your local health care professional.

Go to your nearest Emergency Department if your child shows any of the following signs:

- Unconsciousness, difficulty waking up or lack of full consciousness (for example, problems keeping the eyes open).

- Confusion (not knowing where they are, getting things muddled up).

- Becoming unusually or increasingly sleepy.

- Any problems understanding or speaking.

- Any loss of balance or appears unsteady when walking.

- Any weakness in one or both arms or legs, fails to grasp objects.

- Any problems with their eyesight.

- Very painful headache that won’t go away or becomes more severe.

- Repeatedly vomiting (getting sick).

- Any fits (collapsing or passing out suddenly).

- Clear fluid coming out of their ear or nose.

- Bleeding from one or both ears.

- New deafness in one or both ears.