



CHILDREN'S
HEALTH SYSTEM®

CONCUSSION / MINOR HEAD TRAUMA

Information for Patients

1600 7th Ave. S. ♦ Birmingham, AL ♦ 35233 ♦ 205.939.9100 ♦ CHECK Center Health Information

DEFINITION

A concussion is a mild injury to the brain, which is caused by a blow to the head as a result of a fall, a car accident, a sports injury, or even by being hit over the head with an object. With a concussion, bleeding does not occur under the skull or into the brain, but may occur under the scalp. A concussion is not life-threatening. Concussion is also known as a closed head injury or head trauma.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of a concussion include sleepiness, confusion, irritability, headaches, nausea or vomiting, blurry vision, loss of balance, memory loss, problems thinking or making decisions. Your child may or may not have been "knocked out" or experienced a loss of consciousness. Because there are different degrees of concussions, symptoms may last for several minutes to several hours to several months.

CALL A DOCTOR

If your child experiences any of the symptoms listed above after a head injury, you should seek medical attention immediately. If your doctor is not available, go to the emergency department. The doctor will need to examine your child. The doctor will also get information about the accident or cause of the injury. A CT Scan is often done to assess for any other injuries.

TREATMENT

Observation and rest is the typical approach for a concussion. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin) may also be given if your child has a headache. Always ask your doctor before you give your child any medicine if he/she has a concussion.

RETURNING TO SPORTS

Returning to sports depends on the degree of the concussion. Never return to sports until the doctor has released you to do so.

PREVENTION

Many concussions can be prevented by using protective equipment, which include seat belts and air bags in vehicles and helmets in all contact sports (football, boxing, baseball, rollerblading, bicycle riding etc). Children who participate in any contact sport or activity that can cause brain injury should always wear a helmet.

REFERENCES:

<http://www.emedicinehealth.com>

<http://www.aafp.org>

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Children are the center of our lives.®

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