

## General advice

### Do

- Rest completely at home for at least 24 hours; have a responsible adult with you during this time.
- Take painkillers suggested by your doctor, if needed.
- Take your usual medication but do not take sedatives or tranquilisers.

### Do not

- Drive or operate machinery.
- Do any strenuous activities until you feel fully recovered.
- Drink alcohol or take recreational drugs.
- Take a bath (a shower is safer) for at least 24 hours.
- Play contact sports for example football, rugby or horse riding till your symptoms have completely settled and you have been seen by your general practitioner.
- Return to sport or an occupation that involves balance or heights, such as, gymnastics or window cleaning until you feel fully recovered and you have been cleared by your general practitioner.

## Support

- For general medical advice please use the NHS website, the NHS 111 service, walk-in-centres, or your GP.
- The **NHS website** provides online health information and guidance [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- The **NHS 111** phone line offers medical help and advice from trained advisers supported by nurses and paramedics. Available 24 hours a day. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.
- There are walk-in and urgent treatment services at Brighton Station, in Crawley and at Lewes Victoria Hospital. [www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/ae/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/ae/)
- Headway is a charity that provides support to patients who have suffered a brain injury and have continuing problems. [www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)  
[www.headwayeastsussex.org.uk](http://www.headwayeastsussex.org.uk)  
[www.headwaywestsussex.org.uk](http://www.headwaywestsussex.org.uk)  
Helpline 0808 800 2244

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Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

Ref number: 886  
Publication Date: May 2018  
Review Date: May 2020



Brighton and Sussex  
University Hospitals  
NHS Trust

## Adult head injury Discharge advice for patients who have suffered a head injury & for accompanying adults

### Emergency Department

Royal Sussex County Hospital  
Level 5, Thomas Kemp Tower,  
Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE  
01273 696955 extn. 64261

Princess Royal Hospital  
Lewes Road, Haywards Heath RH16 4EX  
01444 448745

[www.bsuh.nhs.uk](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk)



## What to look out for

- You have had a head injury. You have been given a thorough examination and are now considered fit to be discharged.
- Some people who have had a minor head injury later develop problems which occasionally can be serious.
- **If you experience any of the following, please visit your nearest Emergency Department:**
  - A persistent headache that has not improved with simple painkillers such as paracetamol.
  - You vomit more than once.
  - You develop double vision or other new problems with your eyesight.
  - Clear fluid or new bleeding coming from your ears or nose.
  - Any new problems with your hearing.
  - You have slurred speech or new problems reading, writing or understanding.
  - Any new weakness, clumsiness or heaviness in your arms or legs.
  - Any loss of balance or problems walking.

## For accompanying adults ...

- If you notice any of the following symptoms or those mentioned in the previous section, **please contact your nearest Emergency Department or NHS 111:**
  - Increased drowsiness when they would normally be wide awake.
  - Abnormal or unusual behaviour, such as aggression or confusion.
  - Fitting.

## When will I recover?

- Often people can feel unwell for a few days after a head injury. You should avoid driving and strenuous or dangerous activities until you feel recovered.
- Common symptoms are:
  - Mild headache
  - Dizziness
  - Poor concentration or short term memory problems
  - Irritability or being easily annoyed
  - Mild nausea, without vomiting
  - Lack of appetite
  - Poor sleep and tiredness
- If you have any of these symptoms, do not worry because they should clear up in time without any treatment. These symptoms can last for a prolonged time, up to six months although they should not be worsening. If they worsen then you should see your doctor.
- Most patients recover quickly from their accident and experience no long-term problems. However sometimes problems only appear after weeks or months. If you start to feel that things are 'not quite right' - such as memory problems or not feeling your normal self – please see your GP as soon as possible to ensure you are recovering properly.