

Caring for your child when they hurt their head and have concussion

Children's Emergency Department

Last reviewed: October 2024

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Information for Patients, Parents & Carers

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What is a concussion?

Concussion is a temporary injury to the brain caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head. It can often happen through children/ teenagers playing sport.

The injury cannot be seen on an X-ray or scan. It can affect the way your child thinks and feels, but the symptoms usually settle over a few weeks.

Your doctor or nurse will have told you if they feel your child has a concussion.

Symptoms of concussion include:

- mild confusion
- altered short term memory
- headaches
- dizziness
- feeling dazed
- sleepiness
- altered vision
- clumsiness
- slurred or slowed speech
- poor concentration
- altered emotions (crying, laughing inappropriately or becoming angry)

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How long will it last?

This varies between children, but symptoms can last from 10 days up to 3 months.

How is it treated?

The best way to treat concussion is with 'brain rest'. This is done by avoiding any physical or mental activities such as reading, watching television, using a computer tablet or mobile phone, computer games or going to school.

Once your child has been symptom free for 48 hours they can gradually return to these activities, but will need further rest if symptoms return. This may take up to 1 week.

Returning to sporting activities

If a child returns to sport too soon after a concussion they are at risk of having long-term complications from their concussion.

Once your child has been free of symptoms for 48 hours, they can start a staged return to sporting activity as outlined below.

- Each stage should last 24 to 48 hours and they can progress if they remain symptom free.
- If symptoms return they should move back a stage for 24 to 48 hours.

Stage	Activity	Aim of stage
Stage 1: No activity	Complete physical and mental rest	Recovery
Stage 2: Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming, exercise bike	Gentle increase in heart rate
Stage 3: Increasing exercise	Running Taking part in sporting fitness drills	Adds movement
Stage 4: Non-contact training drills	Passing drills, co-ordination drills	Adds co-ordination and mental stresses to exercise
Stage 5: Full contact practice	Participate in normal training activities	Restores confidence. Allows coaching staff to assess progress
Stage 6: Return to play	Normal game playing	

If you are uncertain about your child returning to sporting activity, or if your child has persistent symptoms, please contact your GP for review or call the Children's Emergency Department.

Contact details

If you have any concerns you can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

Giving us your feedback

We would love to get some feedback on your visit today. Use your smart phone to scan this QR code for quick access to our online feedback survey form.



Alternatively, you can access the feedback form from our website:

<https://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/thinking-of-choosing-us/patient-experience/>

If you have any questions you can write them down here to remind you what to ask:

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على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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