



- Clean any wound with tap water.
- If the area is swollen or bleeding, apply pressure for 5-10 minutes. If continues to bleed, keep applying pressure or seek medical advice.
- If in pain give paracetamol or ibuprofen. Always follow the manufacturers' instructions for the correct dose and form.
- Observe your child closely for the next 2-3 days and check that they are behaving normally and they respond to you as usual.
- It is OK to allow your child to sleep, but observe them regularly and check they respond normally to touch and that their breathing and position in bed is normal.
- Give your child plenty of rest, and make sure they avoid any strenuous activity for the next 2-3 days or until their symptoms have settled.
- Following a head injury, do NOT play ANY contact sport (for example football) for at least 3 weeks without talking to your doctor first.
- You know your child best. If you are concerned about them you should seek further advice.

**Do not worry unduly - these things are expected after a head injury and may last up to two weeks:**

- Intermittent headache especially whilst watching TV or computer games
- Being off their food or feeling sick (without vomiting)
- Tiredness or trouble getting to sleep
- Short periods of irritability, bad temper or poor concentration

**Hospitals with Emergency Departments:**

Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital  
 Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE  
 Princess Royal Hospital  
 Lewes Road, Haywards Heath RH16 4EX  
 Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust  
 East Surrey Hospital, Canada Ave, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust including:

St Richards Hospital, Spitalfield Lane, Chichester PO19 6SE  
 Worthing Hospital, Lyndhurst Rd, Worthing BN11 2DH  
**Minor Injuries Units (MIU) or Urgent Care Centres**

Bognor Regis War Memorial Hospital - Minor Injuries Unit, Shripney Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9PP  
 Open 9am- 5pm, Monday – Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Crawley Urgent Treatment Centre  
 Crawley Hospital, West Green Drive, Crawley RH11 7DH

Open 24 hours, 7 days a week  
 Horsham Minor Injuries Unit  
 Horsham Hospital, Hurst Rd, Horsham RH12 2DR  
 Open 9am- 5pm, Monday – Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Queen Victoria Hospital Minor Injuries Unit (MIU), East Grinstead  
 Holtye Road, East Grinstead RH19 3DZ  
 Open 8am- 10pm, 7 days a week  
 West Sussex - Family Information Service  
 Tel: 01243 777807 [www.westsussex.gov.uk/family](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/family)  
 For more copies of this document, for more information and to feedback, please email us:

Chichester/Worthing area: [contactus.coastal@nhs.net](mailto:contactus.coastal@nhs.net)  
 Crawley area: [CCCG.contactus-crawleyccg@nhs.net](mailto:CCCG.contactus-crawleyccg@nhs.net)  
 Horsham/Mid Sussex area: [HSCCG.contactus-horshamandmidsussexccg@nhs.net](mailto:HSCCG.contactus-horshamandmidsussexccg@nhs.net)



# Head Injury in Children and Young People

**2015 UPDATED**

**Advice for Parents and Carers**

Child/Young Person's Name .....

Advice Given By .....

Location of Injury .....

Date ..... Time .....

Date of Publication: August 2014 / Review Date: August 2016

# Head Injury - Advice for Parents and Carers

This leaflet is to help to advise on how best to care for a child who has a bump / injury to the head.

Head wounds rarely need stitches and can normally be glued by a health professional. This can be done in Minor Injury Units or Urgent Treatment Centres and some GP practices offer a minor injuries service. To find a local service see overleaf.

Please use the "Caring for your child at home" advice section (see overleaf) and the traffic light advice below to help you. **Most children can be managed according to the green guidance below especially if they are alert and interacting with you. It is important to watch the child for the next 2-3 days to ensure that they are responding to you as usual.**

## Traffic light advice:

### Green: Low Risk

#### If your child:

- Cried immediately (after head injury) but returns to their normal behaviour in a short time
- Is alert and interacts with you
- Has not been unconscious / "knocked out"
- Has minor bruising, swelling or cuts to their head

**ACTION:** If all the above have been met then **manage at home**. Follow the advice overleaf or, if you are concerned, contact your GP when they are open or call 111 when your GP surgery is not open

### Amber: Intermediate Risk

#### If your child:

- Is under one year old
- Has vomited once or twice
- Has a continuous headache
- Has continued irritation or unusual behaviour
- Is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Has been deliberately harmed and in need of medical attention

**ACTION:** Take your child to the nearest **Hospital Emergency department** if ANY of these features are present

### Red: High Risk

#### If your child:

- Has been involved in a high speed road traffic accident or fallen from a height over 1 metre or been hit by a high speed object or involved in a diving accident
- Has been unconscious / "knocked out" at any time
- Is sleepy and you cannot wake them
- Has a convulsion or a fit
- Has neck pain
- Has difficulty speaking or understanding what you are saying
- Has weakness in their arms and legs or are losing their balance
- Cannot remember events around or before the accident
- Has had clear or bloody fluid dribbling from their nose, ears or both since the injury
- Has 3 or more separate bouts of vomiting

**ACTION: Phone 999** for an ambulance if ANY of these symptoms are present