

# THE FARNHAM DENE MEDICAL PRACTICE

## ADVICE FOLLOWING HEAD INJURIES

Head injury instructions (based on NICE guidance 2003, adapted for primary care)

Any injury or blow to the head will cause a certain degree of concussion. The seriousness of the concussion depends upon the severity of the injury. Nearly all patients with even slight concussion will probably have a headache for 48 hours. They may well feel a little washed out and irritable during this period. Children often feel sick and may vomit and appear to be sleepy. This is to be expected in children who have had a blow to the head and last 12-24 hours.

Should

1. The headache become more severe
  - The vomiting increase
  - The sleepiness increases so that it is difficult to get the person to talk.
  - The irritability increase
  - The person find that bright lights in the eyes causes distress
  - The person have a fit

Then the person should be taken to hospital for a further examination.

An adult with a suspected head injury should not return home alone.

A child with a head injury should not be left unattended at home for any length of time.

Simple paracetamol is suitable for pain relief.

### **Advice to an adult after a head injury**

- Rest as much as possible, take a few days off work or study
- Take paracetamol for headache
- Avoid stress or major decisions
- Avoid alcohol for a few days
- Avoid driving alone or undertaking tiring journeys
- Tell you employer or tutor that you have a head injury
- Return to work and routine daily activities gradually, avoiding overtime
- If you have problems which worry you or persist after two weeks consult your doctor.

### **After a head injury to a child**

- Allow the child to rest by reducing noise and light levels
- Allow a few days off school
- Give paracetamol for headache
- Discourage noisy play or television programmes
- Encourage plenty of drinks until normal appetite returns
- Inform the teacher that the child has a head injury.
- If you child has symptoms which worry you or persist after two weeks consult a doctor.

The above advice is based on head injury instructions from the Luton and Dunstable Hospital.

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