

fact sheet

Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service

Children with a head injury

Rehabilitation

Head injuries can range from mild concussion to more severe injuries with skull fracture or bruising of the brain. It may or may not include a loss of consciousness. If your child has a mild head injury, make sure they get rest to help them recover. It's important to know the signs of a more severe head injury so you can take action if you need to.

Early on: when to seek medical help

Contact sports should be avoided after the head injury until given clearance by your doctor.

If your child has suffered any head injury and develops any of the following, seek medical help immediately:

- headache
- dizziness
- nausea or vomiting
- drowsiness
- disorientation or confusion
- unsettled or continued crying
- unsteady walking
- slurred speech
- blurred or double vision

If you are worried, contact your local doctor, emergency department or call an ambulance if you think it is an emergency. Do not delay if the symptoms get worse.

Later on: what to expect

Notify your child's school about the head injury and ask the teacher to monitor your child's performance.

You or another adult (e.g. your child's teacher) may notice some of the following changes during the weeks and months after a more serious head injury.

Physical

- clumsiness
- poor balance
- difficulty performing everyday activities
- reduced endurance levels
- Speech and language
- difficulty expressing themselves clearly
- problems understanding or following instructions
- difficulty socialising or interacting with peers

Memory and learning

- difficulties with new school work
- problems with concentration and memory
- slowness when thinking about new things
- difficulty with problem solving

Behaviour

- more demanding or easily frustrated
- getting upset more easily
- more fearful and anxious
- more easily tired or grumpy
- difficulties making or keeping friendships
- change in sleep patterns

The extent of these difficulties and how long they persist depends on the severity of the injury but will generally get better with time.


We are a specialist team that manages the rehabilitation of children with head injuries. We can assess the child's abilities and provide family support, school liaison and therapy for problems which may arise from the injury.

Contact us

Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service

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Lady Cilento Children's Hospital
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In an emergency, always contact 000 for immediate assistance.

 www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au

 www.facebook.com/childrenshealthqld

FS60 developed by Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service.
Updated: February 2015

All information contained in this sheet has been supplied by qualified professionals as a guideline for care only. Seek medical advice, as appropriate, for concerns regarding your child's health.