

WHAT IS CONCUSSION?

A jolt or blow to the head can result in injury that may cause a person to be “knocked out”, dazed or confused. This is often called a closed head injury or concussion. Concussion is a mild head injury as it is usually not life threatening but it can have some serious effects.

The injury to the brain may be significant enough to stop the brain working normally for a short time and as a result the person may lose consciousness. There may be no abnormalities seen on CT scan, but there may be tiny areas of the brain that may be injured that **could cause effects** and that may slow down recovery.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM CONCUSSED?

If you have had a concussion you need to be seen by a doctor. Your GP may send you to the Accident and Emergency Department at your local hospital. Sometimes the doctor may do a CT scan of the brain or X-ray of the skull. The person with concussion may be sent home with a responsible friend or family member who is given instructions of what to look out for and what to do in case of emergency. In some situations the person may stay in hospital overnight to be observed or for further treatment.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF CONCUSSION?

- Headache
- Poor attention and concentration
- Trouble remembering things especially recent events

- Tiredness and lack of energy
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Dizziness and unsteady on feet
- More sensitive to sounds, lights and distractions
- Mood changes- anxious, sad, irritable or unmotivated

Some symptoms may appear immediately and others may not develop until some time after the injury and can last for days or weeks or longer. The symptoms may be so subtle that they may be missed by the person, their family or medical staff. The person may look fine even though they may feel or act differently. Most people may experience one or two of the symptoms but rarely all the symptoms together.

GETTING BETTER

Most people will have a good recovery and symptoms will disappear over time. The length of time to recover can vary from weeks to months. However everyone recovers at different pace and generally recovery may be slower in older people or in people who have had a head injury in the past or in people who have had a more severe concussion. Sometimes the injury can make it hard for people to recognise that they are having problems and they say they are fine even though their family or friends can see that they are not getting better. If you or your family feel that you are not getting better you need to talk to your doctor about getting help.

Other publications about different **Types of Brain Injury, Recovery after Brain Injury and**

Seizures and Brain Injury are also available from the Neuroscience Department in Beaumont Hospital.

It is advised to avoid contact sports for at least 2 months post injury. This is to avoid a secondary injury. If you have any queries, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

This leaflet was developed in order to provide you with information on your condition. If you have any questions, we encourage you to speak to a member of the nursing staff or your doctor.

Contact Details

Beaumont Hospital Tel: 01 8093000
Acquired Brain Injury Nurse Tel: 01 8092913

Further information and advice is available from:

Headway Ireland

The National Acquired Brain Injury Association

National Helpline: 1890 200 278
Email: info@headwayireland.ie
Website: www.headwayireland.ie

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Patient Information
on
CONCUSSION