

## **Children's Emergency Department (CHED)**

### **Head injury Discharge Information Leaflet**

Your child has been seen in the Emergency Department and the team has assessed that your child may be safely treated at home.

This leaflet is to advise you about how to manage your child's injury and to help you decide where and when to get further advice or assessment if needed.

#### **What can I expect?**

- Do expect your child to have a mild headache. They can be given paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Your child may be more tired than usual. They are allowed to sleep.
- Do expect your child to feel generally miserable and 'off colour'. Do not force them to eat but make sure they have enough to drink.
- Do keep your child quiet and resting as much as possible. Keep them away from nursery and school until they feel better and discourage active games, watching TV and reading until symptoms subside. Minimise screentime until they feel better.

**Your child may be quieter than usual or more tired but some signs are more significant and would require you to seek further advice (see end of leaflet "where can I get help?"). These include:**

- Acting irritably or crying constantly.
- Severe or worsening headache that won't go away despite taking pain medication. (a mild headache is normal)
- Becoming unconscious or not responding normally.
- Drowsiness or feeling sleepy that goes on for longer than one hour, when they would normally be wide awake.
- Confusion (e.g. not knowing where they are or getting things muddled up)
- Difficult to wake.
- More than 2 episodes of vomiting.
- Problems understanding or speaking.
- Loss of balance or problems walking.
- Weakness in one or both arms or legs.
- A seizure or a fit (including collapsing or passing out suddenly)
- Changes in your child's eyesight.
- Clear fluid or blood that is coming out of your child's ear or nose.
- New deafness in one or both ears.

## **Giving medicines to your injured child**

Your child may have a headache and can be given paracetamol or ibuprofen. When giving paracetamol you should always follow the instructions on the bottle. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about these medicines:

- It is safe to give both medicines to your child if you don't go above the recommended dose for either in a 24-hour period or give them more often than the bottle says you can.
- It is recommended that if you give both you should wait at least an hour after giving the first medicine before deciding to give the second.
- It isn't dangerous to give them together but spacing them out helps by giving a better spread over 24 hours.
- Your child doesn't need to have a fever to benefit from medicines. You should give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen even if they don't have a fever if they seem miserable, in pain or don't want to eat or drink.

## **When can my child return to normal activities?**

If your child is unaffected by a head injury, they can continue normal activities immediately.

If your child is affected in any way (such as having a headache or feeling tired) they should avoid school, sport and electronic devices.

More advice on when to resume normal activities can be found here:

## **Where can I get help?**

### **Call 111 or visit the NHS 111 website**

- If you feel that you can manage your child's illness, but you want to talk to someone (Your local pharmacist may also be able to help)
- If you are unsure about whether your child needs to be seen or need medical treatment.



### **Your GP or the NHS walk in centre**

- If you have been advised to go there by 111.
- If you feel that your child needs a medical assessment, but it is not an emergency.

### **Go to your nearest Emergency Department or phone 999**

- If your child has the significant features above.
- If your instinct is that your child is dangerously unwell, especially if they have had paracetamol and ibuprofen.
- If you are advised to do so by 111 or your GP.

We aim to provide the best care for every patient. We would like your feedback on the quality of the care you have received at our hospital. Please visit

<http://ratenhs.uk/IQu9vx> Or scan QR code:

