

About head injuries

This leaflet aims to advise on how best to care for a child who has bumped or banged their head.

Most head injuries can be managed at home. The traffic light guide in this leaflet will help you determine what you can do to help your child, or whether you might need to seek further help or advice.

Caring for your child at home

- Clean any wound with tap water
- If the area is swollen or bleeding apply pressure
- Give your child liquid paracetamol or ibuprofen if they are in pain, but please always read and follow the instructions on the medicine container or ask your pharmacist
- Observe your child closely for the next two to three days and check that they are responding to you as usual
- It is okay to allow your child to sleep, but observe them regularly and check that they respond normally to touch and that their breathing and position in bed is normal
- Give them plenty of rest, and make sure they avoid any strenuous activity for the next two to three days or until their symptoms have settled
- You know your child best. If you are concerned about them you should seek further advice.



If you think there's something wrong, always follow your instincts and contact your GP or Health Visitor, or phone NHS 111.

Some useful information

If you need advice please try:

Your local pharmacy can be found at www.nhs.uk

Health Visitor:.....

Your GP Surgery:.....

Please contact your GP when the surgery is open or call NHS 111 when the GP surgery is closed. NHS 111 provides advice for urgent care needs. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls from landlines and mobile phones are free.

NHS Choices:

www.nhs.uk for online advice and information

Buckinghamshire:

For common childhood illness advice see: www.bucks.healthhelpnow.nhs.uk

Family Information Service
Telephone: 0845 688 4944 or
www.bucksfamilyinfo.org.uk

Berkshire:

Family Information Service - Slough
Telephone: 01753 476589 or
www.servicesguide.slough.gov.uk

Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead
Telephone: 01628 685632 or
www.rbwm.gov.uk

The Children and Young People Urgent Care Advisory Group is made up of child health specialists from across the NHS and partner agencies such as the Local Authority and is led by Aylesbury Vale and Chiltern NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups. We are a cross-organisational and multi-specialist group working to improve child health.

This leaflet has been produced after careful consideration of the evidence available including but not exclusively from NICE, SIGN, EBM data and the NHS.



Head Injury

Advice for parents and carers of children aged under 16 years.



Published by the Children and Young People Urgent Care Advisory Group

What should I do if my child bangs or bumps their head?



RED

If your child...

- Fell more than three metres in height (9ft)
- Was knocked out
- Had a convulsion or fit
- Injured their neck or spine
- Has difficulty understanding what you are saying
- Is confused or so sleepy that you cannot wake them properly
- Has weakness in their arms or legs or is losing their balance
- Has new problems with eyesight or hearing
- Has blood or clear fluid dripping out of their ear, nose or both
- Is bleeding a lot from their head
- Has a severe headache
- Has been sick more than once

You need emergency help

Call 999 or go straight to the nearest hospital Emergency (A&E) Department. Your nearest hospitals (open 24 hours, 7 days a week):

- Frimley Park, Surrey
- Hillingdon Hospital
- John Radcliffe, Oxford
- Milton Keynes Hospital
- Royal Berkshire, Reading
- Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury
- Wexham Park Hospital, Slough



AMBER

If your child...

- Fell from a height greater than their own height
- Fell more than a metre in height (3ft)
- Has a blood clotting disorder
- Has possibly consumed alcohol or drugs
- Is very irritable
- Has no concentration or interest in things
- Is under 1 year old
- May have been deliberately harmed
- Has been sick but only once

You need to contact a nurse or doctor today

Please telephone your GP surgery or, if it is closed, call NHS 111.



GREEN

If your child...

Has none of the symptoms listed in the red and amber boxes above and:

- Is alert and interacting normally with you
- Has only minor bruising or minor cuts to their head
- Cried immediately after the head injury but is otherwise acting normally
- May feel sick but has not actually been sick

Self-care

You can care for your child at home using the advice on this leaflet.

If you feel you need more advice, please contact your Health Visitor, GP Surgery or your local pharmacy.

Find links to these at www.nhs.uk

You can also call NHS 111 for advice.