

# Children with Head Injury - A Guide for Parents

## Early On

This information is being given to you after your child has suffered a head injury. Once you are home it is important to report back immediately to the hospital or your family doctor if any of the following symptoms develop.

- Headache
- Giddiness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness
- Unsettled or continued crying
- Unsteady when walking

Do not delay if the symptoms get worse.

If you are worried you can phone:

- Local doctor
- Local Emergency Department
- Children's Hospital at Westmead  
Emergency Department on 9845 0000 or  
Kids Net on 9845 2432

In an emergency call 000 for an ambulance

## Later On

Some of the following changes may be noticed by the family or the teacher during the weeks and months after a head injury.

### Memory Learning

- Difficulty with new school work
- Problems with concentrating or remembering
- Slowness when thinking about new things

### Behaviour

- More demanding or easily frustrated
- More fearful and anxious
- Difficulty getting along with others
- Changes in sleeping patterns

### Speech and Language

- Difficulty understanding or following a conversation or directions
- Difficulty telling a story or re-telling events
- Finding the right word to say

## Physical

- Poor co-ordination
- Clumsiness

The extent of these difficulties and how long they persist depend on the severity of an injury, but generally get better with time. If your child experiences any of these difficulties you can contact the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service at this hospital on (02) 9845 2132.

The team consists of

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech Pathologist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Neuropsychologists
- Cognitive Therapist
- Case Managers
- Social worker

The team members are involved in assessment of your child's abilities, provide therapy, family support and school liaison. This care may begin in hospital and continue on, as an outpatient or outreach service, or include referral to other local services. There are 8 rural Brain Injury Rehabilitation Programs that cover most areas of NSW-see the team for details.



Rehabilitation Department  
The Children's Hospital at Westmead  
Cnr Hawkesbury Rd & Hainsworth St, Westmead  
Locked Bag 4001, Westmead, 2145  
Tel: (02) 9845 2132 - Fax: (02) 9845 0685  
<http://www.chw.edu.au/rehabilitation/>

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