

HEAD INJURIES

Any head injury can be an upsetting experience. Make sure the patient rests quietly. Watch for any changes during the 24 hours after the injury.

Notify your medical center if any of these conditions occur:

1. **Loss of consciousness** or increased drowsiness during a time when the person is usually awake.

2. **Confusion, disorientation, or abnormal behavior.**

3. **Difficulty speaking, slurred or incoherent speech.**

4. **Persistent vomiting or vomiting after the first 8-12 hours.** (Many patients vomit immediately from fright, but the vomiting does not persist.)

5. **Weakness** of arm, leg, or face muscles.

6. Oozing of **blood or watery fluid** from **the nose or ears.**

7. **Persistent headache** lasting over one **hour.** The headache will be severe enough to interfere with activity and **normal** sleep. (Aspirin or acetaminophen may **be** used to **relieve** **headache** but do not use anything stronger.)

8. **Persistent dizziness** for one hour after the injury.

9. **Blurred vision or unequal pupils.** (Be sure the light is **not** shining into one eye or that pupil will be normally constricted and smaller.)

10. **Pallid color** that does not return to normal in a **short** time.

11. **Respiratory difficulty** or difficulty swallowing.

12. **Twitching or convulsions.**

If the patient is nauseated, administer clear fluids only. *Check several times during the first night after the injury to be sure that the patient can be awakened, and that he or she reacts normally and has equal pupil size.*

If you become concerned, call your medical center advice line during center hours or the After Hours emergency number immediately.