

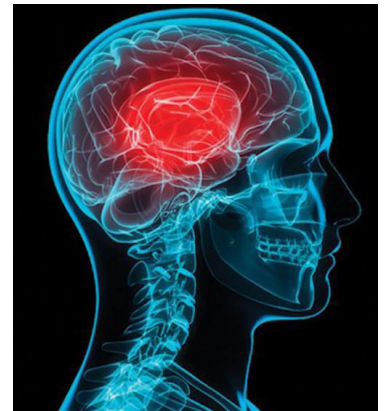
## HEAD INJURY ADVICE FOR ADULT PATIENTS

We have found no evidence to indicate that your head injury is serious. However, the first 24 hours following a head injury are crucial and you should remain with a reliable companion during this period.

### RED FLAGS:

If any of these symptoms occur after your head injury, we suggest you come back to the Emergency Department as soon as possible:

- Drowsiness or altered consciousness
- Confusion or unusual behavioural change
- Convulsions or fits
- Severe or worsening headache or neck pain
- Vomiting more than twice
- Slurred speech
- Problems in understanding or recognising people or faces
- Weakness or numbness in one or more arms or legs
- Loss of balance or problems walking
- Uneven pupils or problems with eyesight
- Loss of bladder or bowel continence
- Bleeding or drainage from the ears or nose



### Immediate care in the first 24 hours:

- Do not drive or operate machinery
- Do not drink alcohol
- Do not take sleeping pills or tranquillisers

### Do not:

- Take NSAIDs (ibuprofen/aspirin/diclofenac/naproxen etc.) for the first 48 hours
- Play any contact sports until you are fully recovered

### You do not need to:

- Stay in bed
- Wake up every hour
- Check the eyes with a light

### These measures should help you get better more quickly:

- Take paracetamol for pain
- Use ice packs for comfort
- Sleep as much as you need
- Have plenty of mental and physical rest
- Avoid noisy and crowded places until you are fully recovered



## CONCUSSION INFORMATION

### What is Concussion?

- Concussion is a brain injury that causes disturbance of normal brain function
- It is diagnosed clinically and cannot be seen on CT or MRI scan
- It is usually caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head
- A person does not have to be knocked out or lose consciousness to be concussed
- Someone who has been knocked out is classed as concussed, although also needs other types of brain injury to be excluded by clinical exam and sometimes imaging
- Concussion symptoms can be delayed and can change over the course of the injury
- Most symptoms start within 48 hours of the injury

### Common signs and symptoms: it is expected to have one or more of these symptoms as a result of concussion:

- **PHYSICAL:** headache / nausea / dizziness / balance problems / fatigue / sensitivity to light or noise
- **COGNITIVE:** feeling foggy / slowed down / difficulty remembering / concentrating
- **EMOTIONAL:** feeling irritable / sad / nervous
- **SLEEP:** drowsiness / sleeping less or more / trouble falling asleep

### How do you recover from a Concussion?

- Most concussions heal over a period of two to four weeks
- It is important that your symptoms are monitored by doctors specialised in concussion. You should be reviewed two to three days after your concussion has been diagnosed to reassess and plan the best recovery strategy for you
- Your brain needs time to heal and relative physical and mental rest is the best medicine for this
- You should NOT participate in any activities that could result in another head injury (e.g. sports, horse or bike riding, water slides, rollercoasters etc.) whilst you recover
- While recovering you are more vulnerable to have a repeat concussion. In rare cases repeat concussions can cause permanent brain damage and even death
- Avoid activities that may cause symptoms to worsen such as:
  - Using ear buds or headphones
  - Loud or bright environments such as movie theatres, malls, supermarkets
  - Using computers / video games / phones or backlit screens for extended periods
- Get adequate sleep - you may need more than usual or daytime naps
- You may need to miss a few days of work or school and postpone exams, have extra breaks at work or school and limit homework
- If you feel well enough, light activity which does not provoke symptoms such as walking, gentle swimming, or easy stationary bike is acceptable
- Once your symptoms are completely gone you should complete a step wise gradual return to sport protocol and will be re-evaluated by your doctor before full clearance to return (your doctor will give you information on how to do this once you are ready to start)

**Appointments with our specialist concussion team, Dr Alan Kourie and Dr Kate Jordan, can be booked by calling 800 1999 or on the MyMediclinic 24/7 app**