

Example discharge advice leaflet for carers of children who have sustained a head injury

HEAD INJURY OBSERVATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Your child has suffered a head injury and should be watched closely for the next 24 hours. If you are worried that he/she is developing a problem, please contact your doctor or this Emergency Department or, if necessary, make arrangements to bring him/her back to hospital by ambulance, taxi or car.

Important things to look out for are:

- increasing confusion (not knowing where they are, getting things muddled up)
- increasing drowsiness (feeling very sleepy all the time)
- persisting headache
- vomiting (being sick)
- weakness of one or more limbs
- not seeing or breathing as well as usual
- watery fluid or blood coming from the ear, nose or mouth
- a fit (collapsing and feeling a bit out of touch afterwards)
- any behaviour not normal for your child.

When your child is sleeping, you should arrange to check him/her for the first night at two-hour intervals to find out:

- Does he/she appear to be breathing normally?
- Is he/she sleeping in a normal posture?
- Does he/she make the expected response when you rouse him/her gently? (eg pulling up sheets, cuddling teddy bear)?

If you cannot satisfy yourself that your child is sleeping normally, he/she should be wakened fully to be checked.

Things you shouldn't worry about:

Your child may feel some other symptoms over the next few days which should disappear in the next two weeks. These include a mild headache, feeling sick (without vomiting), dizziness, irritability or bad temper, problems concentrating or problems with their memory, tiredness, lack of appetite or problems sleeping. If you feel concerned about any of these symptoms in the first few days after discharge you should bring the patient to their doctor.

If these problems do not go away after two weeks, you should bring the patient to see their doctor

CONTACT NO:.....