



Weill Cornell Medical College

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Patient Education:

Concussion, Pediatric

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Concussion, Pediatric

A concussion is an injury to the brain that disrupts normal brain function. It is also known as a mild traumatic brain injury (TBI).

CAUSES

This condition is caused by a sudden movement of the brain due to a hard, direct hit (blow) to the head or hitting the head on another object. Concussions often result from car accidents, falls, and sports accidents.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of this condition include:

- Fatigue.
- Irritability.
- Confusion.
- Problems with coordination or balance.
- Memory problems.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Headaches.
- Dizziness.
- Sensitivity to light or noise.
- Slowness in thinking, acting, speaking, or reading.
- Vision or hearing problems.
- Mood changes.

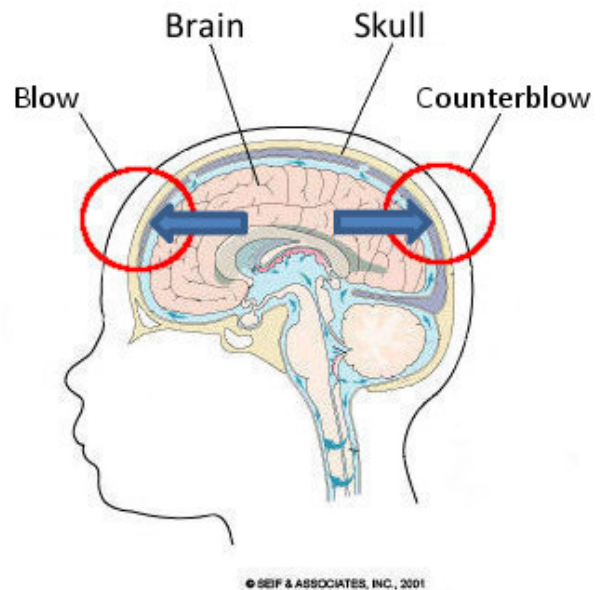
Certain symptoms can appear right away, and other symptoms may not appear for hours or days.

DIAGNOSIS

This condition can usually be diagnosed based on symptoms and a description of the injury. Your child may also have other tests, including:

- Imaging tests. These are done to look for signs of injury.
- Neuropsychological tests. These measure your child's thinking, understanding, learning, and remembering abilities.

TREATMENT



This condition is treated with physical and mental rest and careful observation, usually at home. If the concussion is severe, your child may need to stay home from school for a while. Your child may be referred to a concussion clinic or other health care providers for management.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Activities

- Limit activities that require a lot of thought or focused attention, such as:
 - Watching TV.
 - Playing memory games and puzzles.
 - Doing homework.
 - Working on the computer.
- Having another concussion before the first one has healed can be dangerous. Keep your child from activities that could cause a second concussion, such as:
 - Riding a bicycle.
 - Playing sports.
 - Participating in gym class or recess activities.
 - Climbing on playground equipment.
- Ask your child's health care provider when it is safe for your child to return to his or her regular activities. Your health care provider will usually give you a stepwise plan for gradually returning to activities.

General Instructions

- Watch your child carefully for new or worsening symptoms.
- Encourage your child to get plenty of rest.
- Give medicines only as directed by your child's health care provider.
- Keep all follow-up visits as directed by your child's health care provider. This is important.
- Inform all of your child's teachers and other caregivers about your child's injury, symptoms, and activity restrictions. Tell them to report any new or worsening problems.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your child's symptoms get worse.
- Your child develops new symptoms.
- Your child continues to have symptoms for more than 2 weeks.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- One of your child's pupils is larger than the other.
- Your child loses consciousness.
- Your child cannot recognize people or places.
- It is difficult to wake your child.
- Your child has slurred speech.
- Your child has a seizure.

- Your child has severe headaches.
- Your child's headaches, fatigue, confusion, or irritability get worse.
- Your child keeps vomiting.
- Your child will not stop crying.
- Your child's behavior changes significantly.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

Document Released: 04/22/2008 Document Revised: 05/03/2016 Document Reviewed: 11/25/2015
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