

Information
about

Mild Head Injury

for **Kids** ©



This booklet is dedicated to the late Dorothy Gronwall O.B.E.

This booklet has been produced following a research study into mild head injury, funded by the Victorian Ministerial Implementation Committee on Head Injury.

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Thanks to Rachel Nelms for the illustrations

The booklet was adapted from one written by Dr Dorothy Gronwall & Dr Phillip Wrightson Auckland Hospital, New Zealand. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. The authors also wish to acknowledge the generous support of the Jack Brockhoff Foundation and Victorian Department of Human Services in providing funds for the production of this booklet.

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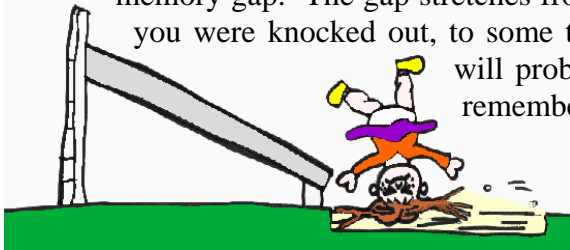
Mild Head Injury - What happened to you

You have had a big bump on the head or you were knocked out and brought into the Emergency Department of the hospital or to the doctor's surgery. Another name for being knocked out is concussion, or mild head injury.



A mild head injury can happen from _____ a bang on the head which either makes you lose consciousness, or makes you dizzy. It usually takes a few days for the brain to get better. Until then your brain might feel “sleepy”. Things that you do may be a bit harder for a while.

Even remembering things that happen can be hard. You were probably asked what you remembered before and after the accident. This is because everyone who has a head injury has a memory gap. The gap stretches from a short time before you were knocked out, to some time afterwards. You will probably never be able to remember this time.



How do you feel?

Some people have a sore head and get a bit dizzy. They can get really tired and be slow to think. It can be hard to remember things. These problems don't last long.

Other people, like Mum or Dad or your teacher may think you're OK, so tell them if you feel bad.

For Parents

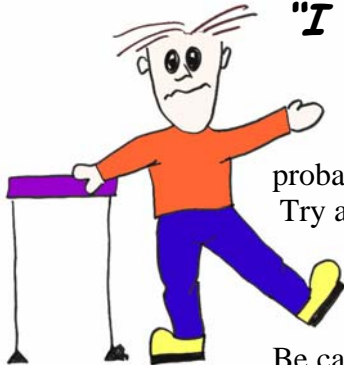
After your child's injury, it is wise to be alert for signs that he or she is not recovering well, and to seek medical advice concerning this. On the back page of this booklet we tell you some of the signs to look out for.

"My Head Hurts....."

Your head might be sore for a few days. It helps to have a break from playing or doing homework, and to lie down in a quiet room if it hurts. If it gets really BAD, ask someone to take you to the doctor.



"I feel Dizzy....."



Sometimes people feel a bit dizzy or sick if they stand or sit up quickly. You probably won't be sick - it just feels like it. Try and do things a little bit slower.

You might also be clumsy and walk into walls or drop things.

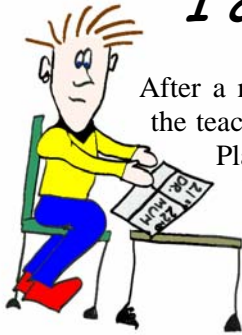
Be careful if you are playing with pets or little kids who could get in your way.

"I'm so Tired....."

If you feel sleepy, go to bed. Even if it is the middle of the day, it's OK to have a rest. Your brain needs more sleep to help it get better.



"I can't Concentrate so well....."



After a mild head injury, you might have trouble listening to the teacher in class, watching TV or playing games like Sony Playstation and Nintendo. This is because the “sleepy” brain can’t concentrate as well.

If you can’t concentrate, take a break or change to another activity.

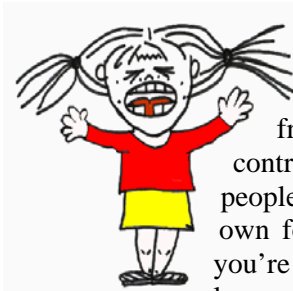
"I can't Remember so well....."

Your sleepy brain may not be so good at remembering things after a knock on the head. Don't worry if you forget someone's name or can't remember what you saw on TV last night. Your memory will get better soon. In the meantime, get someone to draw or write down important things to remember.

A checklist of things to take to or bring home from school can help so that you don't lose stuff.



Getting Angry



You might find that you get more angry with your friends or family. This is because your “sleepy” brain controls how you feel, and it's not working so well. Some people find that just hanging out in their room on their own for a while helps, or getting away from the person you're mad at. Doing some exercise outside might help, as long as you don't get too tired.

Noise Problems

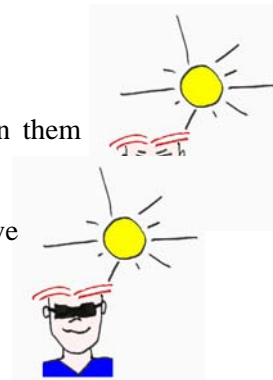


When you don't want to see something you can close your eyes, but you can't close your ears. Often noises seem really loud after a mild head injury. The TV or your little brother crying, or the dog barking might sound way too loud. You could try turning down the TV or stereo, asking others to be quiet or go into a quieter room. Don't try and do something really tricky (like reading a book) if it is very noisy.

Eye Problems

If lights seem really bright, it can help to turn them off. during the day or wear sunglasses outside.

Things can also look blurry or you can have double vision. This will get better soon.



What NOT to do

Do not stay in bed until you are better. You don't need to stay in bed until you get better. You do need to sleep, but you also need to give your brain enough to do to help it get better.



Games and Sport.

Do not play any games or sport where you could get another bang on the head. Football, basketball and skateboarding are a bit risky for a few weeks. Let your sports club know you've had a head injury.



If you are riding a bike, make sure you wear a helmet. Other activities like swimming and tennis are OK.



Getting back to school

You might need to take a few days off school when you get home from hospital. When you get back to school your “sleepy” brain might make it hard to stay awake in class, remember what homework you have to do and join in games at lunchtime.



Make sure your teachers know that you have had a mild head injury, so they can give you extra help. This could be more time to complete work, photocopies of notes on the board and not having to do tests straight away. If it all gets too much, take a few more days off and rest.

We think you'll make a good recovery within a week or so.



Extra Help

Most people make a good recovery, but sometimes people get a bit “stressed out” by what happened.

If you feel this way, ask Mum or Dad to take you back to see your doctor. There are lots of people who can help (for example, an occupational therapist or a neuropsychologist).

That’s all

See You!

Go to your local Hospital's Emergency Department immediately if your child:

- Becomes **unconscious** or unable to be woken-up
- Becomes **confused** (they don't make sense)
- Has any **fits or spasms** of the face or limbs
- **Vomits repeatedly**
- Has **persistent** headaches
- Has **severe dizziness**