

## Return to Activity

### When can I return to sports?

You should never return to play while you have any signs of concussion, such as headache or dizziness. If your symptoms return with activity you will need a longer period of rest.

If you had memory loss or a loss of consciousness, you may not be able to return to play for several weeks.

After a severe concussion, you may be out of play for weeks/months. If this is a repeat concussion, your return to play may take even longer.

### What are the risks of returning to play too soon?

“Second Impact Syndrome” can occur with even a relatively minor blow to the head after a concussion. “Second Impact Syndrome” can result in serious permanent disability or death.

**Always see your doctor prior to returning to sport after a concussion or head injury**

### Can there be lasting effects from a Concussion?

Some people have signs of a concussion for weeks to months. Repeated concussions could cause permanent damage. Most people get better after a concussion without any permanent damage.

### Remember to wear personal protective equipment pertinent to your sport activity:

- **Helmets**
- **Mouth guards**
- **Wrist and knee guards**
- **Eye protection**

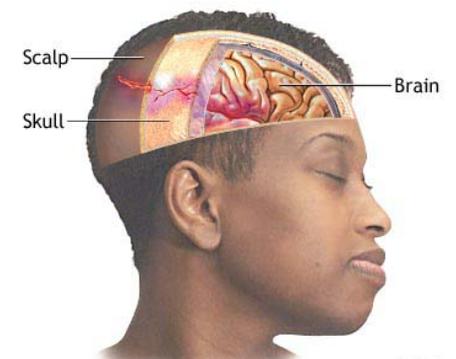
**Please contact your health care provider should you have any concerns.**

SOUTH MUSKOKA  
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

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## Head Injury

### *Patient Information*



# Head Injury/Concussion

## What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain also called traumatic brain injury (TBI). It is usually caused by a blow to the head or neck.

## What are signs and symptoms of concussion?

- headache
- vision disturbance
- dizziness
- loss of balance
- confusion
- memory loss
- ringing in ears
- difficulty concentrating
- nausea
- vomiting

## What is a Minor Head Injury?

You may be diagnosed with a minor head injury if you have hit your head but do not have signs of a brain injury.

## Investigations

Concussion and minor head injury are diagnosed based upon your assessment by the healthcare providers in the emergency department. Most of the time a CT scan is not required. CT scans are usually normal in concussion.

**It is important that you let your healthcare providers know if you are taking blood thinners.**

## Treatment

Common symptoms of concussion such as headache, fatigue, balance problems, difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness will usually resolve on their own. The main treatment for concussion is rest. Both physical and mental rests are important for recovery. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain or headache. Avoid ibuprofen and naproxen (Advil and Aleve).

**Some patients will require 24 hours of supervision. Please let you healthcare providers know if you do not have a responsible adult to observe you after discharge.**

## Return to the Emergency Department if:

- Increased confusion or disorientation
- Severe or increasing headache
- Vomiting
- Decreased level of alertness
- Seizures or abnormal twitching movements
- Pupils (black part in centre of eyes) become different in size
- Clear fluid is dripping from ears or nose
- Progressive weakness or numbness in arm(s) or leg(s)
- Vision problems
- Fever or neck stiffness
- Unable or difficult to wake from sleep

**Your healthcare provider may ask that the patient be woken from sleep every 2-3 hours during the first 24 hours. This is to make sure they are not difficult to wake from sleep.**