

Home care *concussion instructions*

A concussion is an injury to your brain that can change the way your brain works for a short time. Most people who have concussions are improved within seven to 14 days, but some people have symptoms that can last much longer.

SYMPTOMS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH A CONCUSSION

- Headache
- Confusion
- Trouble remembering
- Sleepiness or trouble falling asleep
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Loss of balance
- Poor coordination
- Weakness
- Blurred vision or sensitivity to light
- Slowed reaction times
- Mood swings, irritability or depression

You may notice some of these symptoms are present right after the injury and some may develop several hours to several days after the injury.

After suffering a concussion, it is very important to have someone monitor your symptoms closely. Any red flag symptoms such as: slurred speech, vomiting (more than two times), changes in level of consciousness or uncontrolled headache should be evaluated immediately.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Physical rest: no impact or contact activity until cleared by physician. **Avoid any activity in which you would be at risk of sustaining a second hit to your head.** It is ok to try some light, controlled cardiovascular activity (stationary bike or walk). Start with 10 minutes and slowly increase time each day following. If symptoms get worse, discontinue the activity.

Mental rest: avoid any activities that make your symptoms worse

- OK to be at school as long as your symptoms don't get worse
- You may use phone, television and computers as tolerated. We suggest turning down the brightness of the screens when possible. Use in moderation (15-minute intervals) and discontinue if symptoms get worse.

Importance of sleep: Your brain typically recovers with good quality sleep. When you have a concussion your brain requires even more sleep to recover. Your body needs quality REM sleep which is sometimes difficult to do with a concussion. People with concussions often feel they are sleeping a lot or feel restless. It is recommended that you no longer need to wake the patient up during the night. If you feel you are not getting adequate sleep, please follow-up with your health care provider.

Medications: Over-the-counter (OTC) medications may help to control a headache or other concussion-related symptoms. Headaches that do not improve with OTC pain medication should be evaluated by a health care professional.

Continue to work closely with your health care provider to manage your symptoms/care. If you have any questions, please call (920) 272-3300.

