

Your child may have a concussion

A concussion is a type of brain injury that affects how the brain works. It causes changes in the brain that may not be seen in a CT scan or X-ray.

A concussion may be caused by a blow to the head, face, neck or body. Loss of consciousness may occur.

A concussion may affect balance, reaction time and the way a person thinks and remembers.

Common symptoms

- Sleep disturbances
 - Headache
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Poor balance or coordination
 - Dizziness
 - Visual problems
 - Sensitivity to light or noise
 - Mental 'fogginess'
 - Difficulty concentrating or remembering
 - Irritability
 - Sadness
 - Nervousness
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Red flag symptoms

If you notice any of the following symptoms, take your child to a hospital Emergency Department right away:

- Increased drowsiness
- Worsening headache or neck pain
- Repeated vomiting
- Seizures
- Blurred or double vision
- Slurred speech
- Loss of movement
- Changes in behaviour (irritability, agitation or aggression)

Recovery

The brain needs time to heal

After a concussion, your child must rest their body and mind until all symptoms are gone.

To help your child recover, we recommend that your child:

- Drinks plenty of water to prevent dehydration.
 - Has regular snacks and meals.
 - Gets lots of rest, with regular times for naps and sleep.
 - Limits activities that require concentration, such as playing video games, using the computer, watching TV and playing musical instruments.
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The symptoms of concussion usually improve steadily in 10 to 14 days. Sometimes, recovery takes longer.

If your child's symptoms do not improve within 2 weeks, see your family doctor or health care provider for assessment and referral to a specialist.

Returning to activities

Your child must completely recover before returning to activities.

If your child continues to play when they have symptoms, recovery will take longer.

Getting another concussion while the brain is healing can be very dangerous!

Resources about concussion

Hamilton Helmet Initiative

www.mcmasterchildrenshospital.ca/body.cfm?id=402



Brain Smart Hamilton

www.mcmasterchildrenshospital.ca/body.cfm?id=439



Concussion Ed



- A free mobile app for youth, parents and educators.
- Available in English and French.
- Learn to: Prevent, Recognize, Manage and Track.
- Download at the Apple App Store or Google Play.