

HEAD INJURY

AFTER A HEAD INJURY your child may have a mild headache, mild nausea with possibly one episode of vomiting and be slightly drowsy. Watch your child closely for the next 24 hours. It can take this long for the signs of a concussion (bruise to the brain) to develop.

COLD PACKS may be applied to the skin to decrease swelling or bruising. Place ice in a plastic bag and wrap it in a towel or use cool water on a cloth. Apply the packs for five to ten minutes an hour.

MEDICATION such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be given for headache or pain. **DO NOT** give aspirin.

LIGHT DIET should be given for 24 hours after the head injury. Clear liquids, such as Pedialyte or Gatorade, juices, toast, crackers and soups are usually well tolerated.

QUIET PLAY for the next 24 hours may include reading or watching TV, but do not allow running, sports events, bike riding or rough activities.

SLEEPING more than usual is expected, but you should awaken the child every two hours during the next 24 hours to make sure that the child recognizes you and acts normally.

CALL MY OFFICE or the emergency room if your child has:

- changes in behavior like being more fussy than usual, or if it is hard to awaken the child, or the child just doesn't "look right" to you
- vomiting more than 3 times in a 6 hour period
- eye changes such as crossed eyes, droopy eyelids, trouble seeing, blurry vision or seeing double
- weakness in arms or legs, staggering or swaying while walking or dizziness
- blood or clear fluid from the ears or nose
- fever over 101 degrees
- convulsions or seizures
- headache that becomes suddenly worse

Kathleen E. Ethridge, M.D.
372-3135/303-7119