

If you are still experiencing any of these symptoms **TWO WEEKS** after your injury, then please send this pamphlet into:

**Community Rehabilitation & Brain Injury Service
The Ability Centre
Carmondean Centre Road
Livingston
EH54 8PT**

Please write your name and address here so that CRABIS can get back in touch with you:

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Telephone number.....

Alternatively, you can contact CRABIS direct on 01506 774046. This number is only for people who live in West Lothian and are over 16 years. CRABIS can offer information, advice, support, and if necessary, rehabilitation. If you do not live in West Lothian and you are experiencing any of the above problems we would advise you to get in touch with your own GP – he or she can organise appropriate follow-up for you.

******Please note that CRABIS is NOT a medical emergency service*** - if you have any urgent concerns, such as those listed in Part 3 of this leaflet, please return to hospital immediately.**

**WEST LoTHIAN HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST
HEAD INJURY ADVICE
AND INFORMATION FOR FOLLOW-UP**



1. What is a head injury?

A head injury is caused by a bang or blow to the head. It is sometimes associated with a short spell of unconsciousness. When this occurs you may feel confused or disorientated for some time afterwards. This does NOT mean that any serious or permanent damage has occurred, and in most cases this confusion will resolve by itself.

2. Going home - what to do in the first 24 hours after a head injury

Although you have suffered a head injury, the doctor who has been looking after you feels it is safe to allow you to go home. However, it is very important that you make sure that you are with a RESPONSIBLE ADULT who can observe you at ALL times for the next 24 hours. This is to ensure that in the unlikely event you develop any complications you can receive prompt attention. The responsible adult should make sure:

- You are not left alone at any time
- They wake you from sleep at least twice during the night
- You do not drive or operate any dangerous machinery
- You do not take any alcohol or drugs that have not been prescribed by a doctor

It is ok to sleep when you feel like it – unlike in cinema films, people should not be kept awake!

3. Things to look out for

Most patients recover quickly after a minor head injury. However, if you develop any of the following symptoms you should return IMMEDIATELY to the Emergency Department:

- Confusion or disorientation
- Drowsiness or difficulty waking up
- Severe or worsening headache, which is not made easier by taking painkillers (eg paracetamol)
- Repeated vomiting
- Weakness or odd sensations in your limbs
- Problems with balance or dizziness
- Slurring or loss of speech
- Fits or convulsions of any type
- Fluid/blood coming out of the nose/ears

ANY of the above symptoms should make you return to the Emergency Department. If you are not sure whether to return or not, then please call us – the direct line for the Emergency Department Nurses and Doctors is: **01506 523012**.

4. What happens after the first 24 hours?

After a head injury or accident some people experience symptoms that can cause worry or nuisance. Sometimes these symptoms can last for up to two weeks. To make sure you get better more quickly, we would advise that over the next 2 weeks you:

- Take time to rest and do not get over-worked
- Avoid contact sports – your concentration may have been affected by the injury so these sports are potentially dangerous
- Inform your employer that you have had an injury

If after two weeks you are experiencing any of the symptoms that are listed below, then you might benefit from follow-up with a rehabilitation service. The **Community Rehabilitation and Brain Injury Service (CRABIS** – contact details over the page) offers help to people who are having persisting problems after a head injury. If you are experiencing problems **TWO WEEKS** after the injury we would like you to fill in the following questionnaire and send it back to us.

For each symptom please circle YES or NO. As many of the following symptoms occur normally, we would like you to compare yourself now with before the accident.

Compared with before the accident, do you suffer from:

Feelings of dizziness	YES	NO
Noise sensitivity, easily upset by loud noise	YES	NO
Sleep disturbance	YES	NO
Fatigue, tiring more easily	YES	NO
Being irritable, easily angered	YES	NO
Feeling depressed or tearful	YES	NO
Feeling frustrated or impatient	YES	NO
Forgetfulness, poor memory	YES	NO
Poor concentration	YES	NO
Taking longer to think	YES	NO
Light sensitivity - easily upset by bright light	YES	NO
Restlessness	YES	NO

Are you experiencing any other difficulties?

Please list here:
