The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4323.
Head Injury in Children

Information for Parents/Carers

The doctor has examined your child to detect any immediate problems but does not feel he/she needs to stay in hospital.

Only a small number of children get any problems after going home. Most problems occur during the first 24 hours after injury. It is therefore essential that a responsible adult should be with your child for at least 24 hours after the accident so that they can get help if he/she becomes ill.

There is no need to keep your child awake and they should be allowed to rest if they want to. However, keep a close eye on them if they sleep during the day, and check up on them 2 or 3 times during the night.

In addition children after head injuries should:

- Do gentle activities only for the first 24 hours.
- Be given light meals to begin with.
- Be given their usual medicine; if they take any.
- Not play on climbing frames or on bikes for 24 hours.
- Avoid noisy environments.
- Be given Paracetamol syrup (Calpol) or Ibuprofen (Nurofen for children) in normal doses if they have a headache or other pain.

You should bring your child back immediately if he/she:

- Vomits repeatedly. It is not common for children to vomit once or twice and you should not worry about this in the absence of other symptoms.
- Becomes unusually sleepy or is hard to wake up.
- Becomes confused or does not appear to behave normally.
- Becomes fretful or agitated, not settling with simple painkillers.
- Complains of persistent blurred or double vision or new deafness.
- Has a fit or collapses.
- Has clear fluid or blood coming out of his/her ears or nose.

It is not common for children to be generally tired and sometimes rather irritable or clingy after head injuries. They might also have some behavioural difficulties at their creche, playgroup or school. When you feel your child is ready to start back again, you should inform the teacher or the person in charge of the group that your child has had a head injury and ask to be informed of any problems. If your child has had such problems they usually settle in a few days but they can last longer. If this is the case it would be appropriate for you to discuss this with your GP, or return to the Emergency Department.