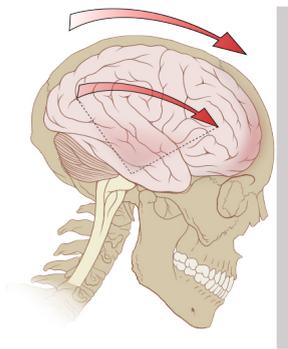


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Concussion: Parent's Guide



A concussion is a mild brain trauma caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. This can change how the brain works. Problems can last for days, weeks, or longer. Common causes of concussions include falls, car crashes, and contact sports like football. The most common symptom is a headache. Other problems requiring medical attention also may include:

- blurred vision
- loss of balance
- fatigue
- feeling dizzy
- sleep problems
- sensitivity to light and noise
- depression
- unequal pupil size
- nausea and vomiting
- trouble concentrating
- feeling grumpy
- confusion
- slurred speech
- stiff neck
- seizure

PREVENTION OF A CONCUSSION

Prevent concussions by wearing seatbelts in the car and buckling children in safety seats. Do not drive after drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Prevent falls on stairs by putting up handrails, and use safety gates on stairs to protect young children. Mount grab bars in the bathroom with no slip mats in the tub and on floors. Improve lighting and remove trip hazards. Place safety guards by windows to keep children from falling out. Wear a good fitting helmet when biking, skating, skiing, horseback riding, riding a motorcycle, or playing any contact sport.

MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT OPTIONS

Rest is the main treatment after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. Your osteopathic family physician may recommend time off from work or school. Avoid any strenuous physical or mental tasks such as playing video games, listening to loud music, heavy cleaning, and exercising. Avoid studying, reading, or working on the computer. Let the brain rest and do not start back all at once. Eat good meals with fresh fruits and vegetables. Take only drugs approved by your doctor, and do not drink alcohol. Alcohol and certain drugs may slow the rate the brain can heal and may make things worse. Do not drive, as this is not safe. A concussion should prompt early treatment with a good history, exam, and any necessary tests. Some cases may need more care by a doctor at a hospital. The goal is to help prevent the injury from causing long-term effects. These can include problems with sleep, focus, memory, headaches, and sometimes skills such as walking and balance. Your family physician will help you decide which treatment plan(s) will work best for you. In case of any emergency, you should call your doctor or 911 immediately or if possible safely go to the nearest hospital.

Source(s): Concussion.gov, FamilyDoctor.org, and [MedlinePlus](http://MedlinePlus.gov).

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