Skull Fracture, Uncomplicated, Adult

You have a skull fracture. This happens when one of the bones of your head cracks or breaks. Your injury does not appear serious at this time and we feel you can be observed safely at home. An injury to the head which causes a skull fracture may also cause a concussion. With a concussion you may be knocked out for a brief moment (*loss of consciousness*). A concussion is the mildest form of traumatic brain injury. The symptoms of a concussion are short-lived and resolve on their own. The most common symptoms are confusion and forgetting what happened (*amnesia*).

THESE MINOR SYMPTOMS MAY BE EXPERIENCED AFTER DISCHARGE:

- Memory difficulties.
- Dizziness.
- Headaches.
- Hearing difficulties.
- Vertigo or trouble with balance.
- Depression.
- Tiredness.
- Difficulty with concentration.
- Nausea
- Vomiting

A bruise on the brain (*concussion*) requires a few days for recovery the same as a bruise elsewhere on your body. It is common for people with injuries such as yours to experience such problems. Usually these problems disappear without medical care. If symptoms remain for more than a few days, notify your caregiver. See your caregiver sooner if symptoms are becoming worse rather than better.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- During the next 24 hours you should stay with an adult who can watch you for the above warning signs.
- This person should note any of the above signs or symptoms. **Problems which are getting worse mean you should call or return immediately to the facility where you were just seen, or to the nearest emergency department. In case of emergency or unconsciousness, call for local emergency medical help.**
- You should take clear liquids for the rest of the day and then resume your regular diet.
- You should not take sedatives or alcoholic beverages for 48 hours after discharge.
- After injuries such as yours, most serious problems happen within the first 24 hours.
- If x-rays or other testing were done, make sure you know how you are to get those results. It is your responsibility to call back for results when your caregiver suggests. Do not assume everything is fine if your caregiver has not been able to reach you.
- Skull fractures usually do not need follow up x-rays. These fractures are not like broken arms. The position of the skull stays the same as when it was broken and usually heals without problems.
- If you have a concussion be aware that symptoms may last up to a week or longer.
- It is very important to keep any follow-up appointments after a head injury.
- It is unlikely that serious side effects will occur. If they do occur it is usually soon after the accident but may occur as long as a week after the accident or injury.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Confusion or drowsiness develops; children frequently become drowsy after any type of trauma or injury.
- A person cannot arouse the injured person.
- You feel sick to your stomach (*nausea*) or persistent, forceful vomiting (projectile in nature).
- Rapid back and forth movement of the eyes. This is called nystagmus.
- Convulsions, seizures, or unconsciousness.
- Severe persistent headaches not relieved by medication. Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. (Do not take aspirin as this weakens

blood clotting abilities).

- Inability to use arms or legs appropriately.
- Changes in pupil sizes.
- Clear or bloody discharge from nose or ears.

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