



First aid fact sheet

Concussion



Any person who has suffered loss of consciousness or an altered state of consciousness after a blow to the head should not return to their activity (eg sport) and should see a medical practitioner urgently.

Signs and symptoms

Some or all of the following can indicate concussion:

- loss of consciousness
- persistent headache
- faintness, dizziness
- confusion
- loss of memory, particularly of the event
- blurred vision
- slurred speech
- altered or abnormal responses to commands and touch
- vomiting within a few hours after a head injury
- wounds to the scalp or face

What to do

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 If the patient is conscious and no spinal injury is suspected, place the patient in a position of comfort (usually lying down) with their head and shoulders slightly raised.
- 3 Advise them to seek medical attention.
- 4 If the patient is unconscious and a neck or spinal injury is suspected, place the patient in the recovery position, carefully supporting the patient's head and neck, and avoid twisting or bending during movement.
- 5 Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.
- 6 Ensure the patient's airway is clear and open. Keep the patient's airway open by lifting their chin. **DO NOT** force if the face is badly injured.

Head injury

- 1 Control any bleeding with direct pressure at the point of bleeding. If you suspect the skull is fractured, use gentle pressure around the wound.
- 2 If blood or fluid comes from the ear, secure a sterile dressing lightly over the ear. Lie the patient on their injured side, if possible, to allow the fluid to drain.
- 3 Ensure an ambulance has been called, noting the patient's condition so that you can report it to the paramedics.

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

DRSABCD Danger ► Response ► Send for help ► Airway ► Breathing ► CPR ► Defibrillation

You could save a life with first aid training • www.stjohn.org.au • **1300 360 455**

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