



Mild head injury or traumatic brain injury (TBI)

Licht traumatisch hoofdletsel en of hersneletsel (LTH)

Information for people who have suffered head trauma.

What is a mild head injury or TBI?

In a mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), the brain is shaken up for a short time, and short-term loss of consciousness and/or memory may occur. Loss of consciousness can range from a few seconds up to fifteen minutes. If the injury is not paired with changes in consciousness, it is only a head injury. A head injury often has milder symptoms than a mild TBI.

Symptoms

In some cases, you may be unable to remember anything about the accident or some time before it. The memories usually come back quickly until just before the accident. You may also be unable to remember anything about the time immediately after the injury; this is called post-traumatic amnesia (PTA) and may last a while. Because the brain does not store information during this time, PTA does not usually disappear afterwards. There is no point in continuing to search for these memories.

The more severe the traumatic brain injury, the longer the loss of consciousness and associated PTA. A head injury or mild TBI usually passes without residual symptoms. Many patients experience post-traumatic symptoms in the first few days or weeks. Common complaints after an accident (trauma) include:

- headache;
- dizziness;
- blurred vision;
- slower information processing;
- memory and concentration problems;
- difficulty with tasks that require attention or effort;
- easily tired;
- drowsiness;
- easily irritable;
- hypersensitivity to light and sound;
- tinnitus and loss of hearing.

This is quite normal and is usually nothing to worry about. Bed rest is not necessary during this period, but it is wise to take it easy. The severity of the symptoms often decreases on its own.

Cause

A head injury or mild TBI results from a blow to the head or a sudden movement of the head. It is unclear why some people have more symptoms than others.

Diagnosis

The physician makes the diagnosis based on the patient's explanation and symptoms and/or the explanation of bystanders. Depending on age, duration of loss of consciousness, the impact of the blow, and neurological examination, a head scan may be performed to detect bleeding.

What can you do about it?

To prevent more or more severe symptoms and promote healing, we recommend the following:

First days after returning home:

- Strict bed rest is not recommended. It is best to slowly reduce your time in bed to get back on your feet within a few days and resume your normal activities as soon as possible.
- Limit the use of television, computers and video games.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Do not take aspirin as pain relief. If you already take aspirin, you can continue to use it at your usual dosage unless the doctor advises you otherwise. Paracetamol is allowed: a maximum of 6 x 500 mg per 24 h. Take sufficient paracetamol for the first few days. Properly suppressing the pain makes it easier to function as normally as possible during the day and sleep well at night.

When to contact your doctor

Contact your hospital physician **immediately** through the Accident & Emergency department in the following cases:

- a rapid worsening of your condition in the first few days or weeks;
- significant increase in headaches;
- repeated vomiting;

- confusion;
- drowsiness (you are difficult to wake up)

Accident & Emergency department

Haarlem Noord +31 23 224 7880
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If your symptoms persist for more than six months, contact your primary care physician and, if necessary, a neurologist. They will consider whether an examination into the cause of your symptoms is necessary.

Contact and questions

If you have any questions or your symptoms worsen, please contact the neurology outpatient clinic +31 23 224 0110.

Contact the Accident & Emergency department outside of office hours:

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More information

www.hersenstichting.nl

seh zorg.nl information about concussions

Courtesy of

Text provided by the Dutch Society of Neurology (NVN), www.neurologie.nl

Where to find us

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