

Concussion (Mild Traumatic Brain Injury)

What is a concussion?

Concussion is also called a mild Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). This injury is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Sometimes, the injury causes a brief loss of consciousness but this is not always the case.

What are the common side effects from a concussion?

In the majority of cases, the effects of concussion resolve over time. Most people have complete recovery in weeks. During the initial days and weeks after injury you can expect some or all of the following symptoms, which may improve at different rates:

- Headache. Take Tylenol[®] or ibuprofen (such as Motrin[®]) to reduce the pain.
- Dizziness.
- Sensitivity to noise, light, or lots of sensory stimulation. For example, having difficulty in a crowded room.
- Memory and/or attention problems. These may be more noticeable after returning to work or school.
- Slowed processing speed. It may take you longer to think and process thoughts or actions.
- Changes in sleep.
- A strong emotional reaction to having been injured
- Changes in mood. You may have rapid changes in mood (lability) and feel anger, irritability, depression and anxiety. You may want to be isolated from other people, and be concerned about participating in community activities.

You can expect to have these symptoms with a concussion, but also expect that they will gradually improve. If these symptoms continue for **more than 2 weeks**, you need to return to the Rehabilitation Concussion Clinic so the doctor can examine you again. Call (734) 936-7175 to schedule your appointment.

When should I go back to the ER?

You must **return to the ER immediately**, if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Very severe headache, **more** than usual
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weakness in one of the legs or hands
- Extreme drowsiness or inability to wake from sleep
- Seizures

Family members: monitor the patient closely for any of these signs or symptoms. **Bring the patient back to the ER immediately** if you see any of the above symptoms.

Post discharge care:

- Because of concerns for safety a responsible adult must **supervise you for the first 48-72 hours** after you go home from the hospital.
- **Avoid contact sports** or any activity with risk of head injury while you are experiencing symptoms. If you are still having symptoms three weeks following your concussion, talk with your doctor about resuming some form of physical activity.
- Do not drink alcohol. Do not use “street” drugs.
- Avoid activities that worsen your symptoms. If your symptoms worsen with an activity, stop the activity and allow your brain to rest.
- **Always wear helmets** with high-risk activities such as: football, skiing, biking, rollerblading, etc.

- Return to school or sports gradually.
- If symptoms persist for more than two weeks, contact the Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Concussion Clinic for an appointment

For Clinic Appointments:

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Concussion Clinic

325 East Eisenhower Parkway

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Appointment Phone: (734) 936-7175

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Reviewer: Ryan Stork MD

Patient Education by [University of Michigan Health System](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#). Last Revised 10/2016