



- If your child is vomiting or has a seizure, turn him/her on the side while trying to keep the head and neck straight.
- If there's swelling, apply an ice pack or cold pack.

If your child is conscious:

- Do your best to keep him/her calm and still
- If there's bleeding, apply sterile dressing (bandage)
- Do not attempt to cleanse the wound, which may aggravate bleeding and/or cause serious complications if the skull is fractured,
- Do not remove any object that is stuck in the wound.

Concussions are also considered a type of internal head injury. A concussion is the temporary loss of normal brain function as a result of injury. Repeated concussions can result in permanent injury to the brain. One of the most common reasons kids get concussions is through sports, so it is important to make sure they wear appropriate protective gear and don't continue to play if they've had a head injury. However, it's possible to get a concussion that's mild and just requires observation.

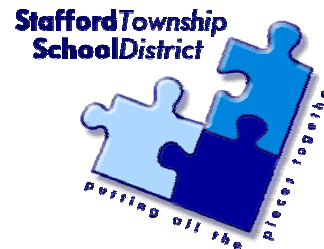
If your child sustains an injury to the head; watch for the following signs that indicate that he/she may have a concussion:

- Seeing stars and feeling dazed,

dizzy or light-headed

- Trouble remembering things such as what happened directly before and after the injury occurred.
- Nausea or vomiting
- Headaches
- Blurred vision and sensitivity to light
- Slurred speech or saying things that don't make sense
- Difficulty concentrating, thinking, or making decisions
- Difficulty with coordination or balance
- Feeling anxious or irritable for no apparent reason
- Feeling overly tired

If you suspect a concussion, call your child's doctor for further instructions.



For additional information contact your school nurse at 609-978-5700

Primary Learning Center x1276
Ocean Acres x1113
Oxycocus x1073
McKinley Avenue x1140
Intermediate x1074
District Nurse Coordinator x 1205

Wellness Series

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Head Injuries





Head Injuries

Head injuries fall into two categories: External (usually scalp) injuries and Internal head injuries, which may involve the skull, the blood vessels within the skull, or the brain.

Fortunately, most childhood falls or blows to the head result in injury to the scalp only, which is usually more frightening than threatening. An internal head injury could have more serious implications because the skull serves as the protective helmet for the delicate brain.

External (scalp) Injury

The scalp is rich with blood vessels, so even a minor cut to the scalp can bleed profusely. The “goose egg” or swelling that may appear on the scalp after a head blow results from the scalp’s veins leaking fluid or blood into and under the scalp. It may take several days or even weeks to disappear.

What to look for and what to do:

Call your child’s doctor if your child is an infant and has lost consciousness, even momentarily, or if your child of any age does any of the following:

- Won’t stop crying
- Complains of head and neck pain
- Becomes difficult to console
- Isn’t walking normally

If your child is **not** an infant, has **not** lost

consciousness and is alert and behaving normally after the fall or blow:

- Apply an ice pack or instant cold pack to the injured area for 20 minutes. If you use ice, always wrap it in a washcloth or sock; ice applied directly to bare skin can cause frostbite damage
- Observe your child carefully for 24 hours. If he/she shows any of the signs of internal injury (see below), call your child’s doctor immediately.
- If the incident has occurred close to bedtime or naptime and your child falls asleep soon afterward, check him/her every few hours for twitching limbs or disturbances in color or breathing.
- If color and breathing are normal, and you observe or sense no other abnormalities, let your child sleep (unless your child’s doctor has advised otherwise). There’s no need to keep a child awake after a head injury.
- If color and/or breathing are abnormal, or if you aren’t comfortable with your child’s appearance (trust your instincts), arouse your child partially by sitting him/her up. Your child should fuss a bit and attempt to resettle. If he/she doesn’t protest, try to awaken your child fully. If your child can’t be awakened or shows any signs of internal injury (see below), call your child’s doctor or an ambulance.

Suspected Internal Injury

The brain is cushioned by cerebrospinal fluid, but a severe blow to the head may knock the

brain into the side of the skull or tear blood vessels. Any internal head injury—fractured skull, torn blood vessels, or damage to the brain itself—can be serious and possibly life threatening. There are different levels of injury that require different levels of concern. It can be difficult to determine the level of injury, so it’s always wise to discuss a head injury with your child’s doctor. A clear indicator of a more serious injury is when your child loses consciousness or has signs of confusion.

What to look for and what to do:

Call an ambulance if your child shows any signs of the following symptoms:

- Unconsciousness
- Abnormal breathing
- Obvious serious wound or fracture
- Bleeding or clear fluid from the nose, ear or mouth
- Disturbance of speech or vision
- Pupils of unequal size
- Weakness or paralysis
- Dizziness
- Neck pain or stiffness
- Seizure
- Vomiting
- Loss of bladder or bowel control

If your child is unconscious:

- Do not try to move him/her in case of neck or spine injury
- Call for help
- If you’ve been trained in CPR, follow the recommendations if appropriate