

What to Expect After a Concussion

Read this brochure to learn more about:

- Symptoms to watch for
- What to do in case of emergency
- How The iScope Concussion Clinic can help you



1-888-550-5508

What can I expect after a concussion?



A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) also referred to as a “mild” TBI.

How will I feel after I have had a concussion?

Concussions can lead to symptoms that might appear right away or a few days later. Symptoms can last for days, weeks or even longer. Some people may experience only one symptom and others may experience many.

Concussions can affect how you think and feel, as well as your mood and sleep. Here are examples of symptoms that you might experience after a concussion:

THINKING

Feeling foggy, Trouble thinking clearly, Feeling slowed down, Hard time remembering and focusing, Trouble finding words

PHYSICAL

Headaches, Throwing up, Dizziness, Sensitive to light and noise, Vision problems (blurred or double vision, Balance problems, Ringing in ears, Low energy or feeling sluggish

EMOTIONAL MOOD

Irritable, Nervous or anxious, Frustrated, Angry, Sad

SLEEP

Sleeping more or less than you normally would, Hard time falling asleep or staying asleep

This information comes from:

- [The Centre for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre](#)
- [Brainline.org](#)

Things to watch out for...

Track your symptoms by writing them down. Here are some warning signs that are linked to more serious brain injuries:

Warning signs in adults

- Headaches that won't go away and/or get worse
- Sudden or severe throwing up or feeling like you are going to be sick (nausea)
- Fainting or blacking out
- Difficulty waking up
- Feeling sleepy
- Seizures or convulsions
- Unable to recognize people or places that you know
- Feeling confused, restless or agitated
- Feeling weak
- Numbness in different parts of your body
- Poor balance or coordination
- Slurred speech, trouble talking or not making sense
- Fluid or bleeding from your ear or nose
- Not behaving like your usual self
- Having one pupil in your eye bigger than the other

Warning signs in children

- Any of the adult warning signs
- Will not stop crying and cannot be consoled or soothed
- Will not nurse or eat

Reference: Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation



If you experience any of these warning signs after a concussion, call your doctor or go to the emergency department right away.



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THINGS YOU CAN DO:

Get enough rest and sleep.

- Rest your body and mind as much as you need to.
- Avoid doing activities that make you feel very tired. How long it will take for you to return to your usual activities depends on many things. Everyone is different.

Talk to you doctor about when it's safe to drive again.

Don't drink alcohol or do drugs.

Drinking alcohol, taking sleeping pills or recreational drugs can make you feel worse. They also make it difficult for other people to tell whether the injury is affecting you or not.

Talk to your doctor about what pain relief is right for you.

Don't play sports again until your doctor or health care team says it's safe to do so.

It is dangerous for the brain to be injured again if it has not recovered from the first concussion. Talk to your doctor about what you need to do before playing sports again.

The rule is: If in doubt, sit out.

Take time off work or school if you need to.

- You may need to take time off work or school until you can concentrate better. Many people need some time off work but return full-time in less than 2 weeks. How much time you need will depend on the type of job you do.
- Let your employer or teachers know if you are having problems at work or school. You may need to return gradually.
- See your doctor about returning to work or school.

Ask us how concussions can affect your personal relationships.

Sometimes your symptoms will affect your relationship with family and friends. You may feel irritated and have mood swings. Tell your doctor if you are worried about your personal relationships.

Know about your recovery.

Not everyone has the same symptoms or recovers at the same time. If you are worried that your recovery is taking too long, or if your symptoms are getting worse, see to your doctor. - Reference: UHN 'Recovery from a Concussion'

What if I am not getting better?

For some, concussion recovery can take longer. Symptoms that last longer than three months are referred to as 'persistent symptoms.'

It is important to give the brain time to heal. Don't wait too long to get the care you need.



Getting better from a concussion may take longer if you:

- are a teenager or an older adult
- go back to school, exercise or work too soon
- have had a concussion before
- have a history of migraine headaches
- have mental health issues such as depression or anxiety
- have trouble sleeping
- are female
- are showing signs of vestibular or visual abnormalities (e.g. blurred vision, dizziness, difficulty focusing, motion sensitivity)

How can our Clinic help?

iScope Concussion and Pain Clinic believes early treatment is essential for optimal recovery. Clinics are located in Toronto, Mississauga (ON), Vancouver, Surrey (BC).

We offer concussion care for patients within days of their concussion diagnosis. Our patients receive care and follow-up services from a team of neurologists and concussion specialists, physiotherapists, occupational therapy and other health care specialists.

We focus on concussion rehabilitation. Our team of Neurologists and concussion specialists also can prescribe medication and if needed order tests to help with your recovery. Go to myiscope.ca under "Our Services" for treatment information.

Call us to book your initial assessment with a concussion specialist or physiotherapist.

1-888-550-5508 or info@myiscope.ca



Information in this booklet came from The Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation and University Health Network Concussion Clinic.

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