

Memo:

Pediatric Emergency Department (Pronto Soccorso) tel. 0498213515



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Salus Pueri Foundation has been active since 1992 and its main goal is to raise funds to support the activities of the Pediatric Hospital of Padua. Every day we work to make our hospital a welcoming and child and family friendly place, and to promote a culture where humanization is at the heart of care.

These parents information guides of the Pediatric Emergency Department of Padua have been created to facilitate the provision of clear and complete information to parents whose kids are experiencing acute health issues.

The parents information guides are not intended to replace the recommendations and tailored advice provided by your pediatrician.

Support the Pediatric Hospital of Padua!

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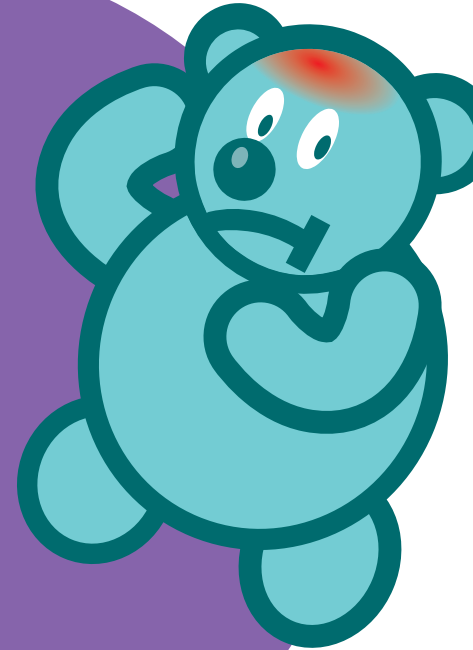


Dipartimento per la Salute
della Donna e del Bambino
- Pronto Soccorso Pediatrico -



**FONDAZIONE
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Mild head trauma



Parents
information
guides



What is mild head trauma?

It is common for children to hit their heads and sustain a head trauma because of a fall, a road traffic accident or a direct blow to the head by objects during leisure activities and play.

Head trauma is defined as “mild” when, at the Emergency Department evaluation, the child is awake, responsive as usual, has a normal neurological examination and the child remains stable over time.

Background information:

- Mild head trauma is the most frequent type of head injury in children;
- In the hours following a head trauma, even if mild, the child may show transient and non-serious symptoms such as vomit, headache or brief loss of consciousness. Sometimes swelling of the head may appear, especially in younger patients; in some cases this sign may be associated with an underlying fracture of the skull;
- While head trauma may lead to bleeding inside the head and damage to the brain, this is rare (<1%) in children with mild head trauma.
- The test used to identify bleeding in the head in the emergency setting is brain computer tomography (CT). However, this test includes the use of radiations, which may lead to other health risks in the child future: for this reason CT is used very selectively and only in case of major symptoms;
- In children with mild head trauma, clinical observation is very important in order to ensure that minor symptoms, when present, resolve (or significantly improve) and that major symptoms (potentially requiring further investigation) do not appear.

Home care after a mild head trauma:

During the days following a head trauma (especially in the first 48 hours), the child should carefully be observed by a responsible adult. Special attention must be paid to behavioral changes, symptoms like vomit or headache and, in general, to any unusual event.

Your child must be taken immediately to a Hospital Emergency Department (Pronto Soccorso) if you observe any of the following:

- your child sleeps more than usual, especially at times during the day in which the child is usually awake;
- behavioral changes (agitation, irritability, confusion, repetitive questions, slow response);
- difficulty in speaking (slurred or unclear speech) or understanding things;
- balance problems, walking difficulties;
- weakness of one or more limbs (arms, legs);
- vomiting more than once;
- Persistent headache that is not relieved by pain medications;
- Visual disturbance (blurred or double vision);
- Bleeding or clear fluid leak from the nose or ears;
- Seizures (i.e. convulsions);
- Any other unusual behavior for your child.

! Head trauma must be prevented!

Head traumas are, overall, the most important cause of death and disability in children and this is the reason why they must be prevented.

The following head injury prevention measures should be applied:

- Make sure your child wears a helmet when cycling, or during sports/leisure activities with risk of falling/crushing (for example horse riding, skateboarding);
- Always use car seats, approved for your child weight, height and age;
- Limit access to stairs when the baby is learning to walk;
- Avoid behaviors with risk of falling from more than 1 meter height, such as taking the baby on the shoulders or leaving your child alone on high chairs or a changing table;
- Refrain from shaking children, even just for fun.