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HEAD INJURY

Nearly all children bump their heads now and then. Most head trauma is minor and children do fine afterwards. In very rare instances, problems can occur after the head injury. When children injure their heads, we evaluate the *mechanism* of trauma and your child's *reaction* to the trauma. **If your child has lost consciousness, we want to hear from you immediately.**

Applying ice to bumps will decrease swelling *on the outside* of the skull, however, our primary concern is *inside* your child's head, and ice will not be helpful for that. It is fine to give your child acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) after head trauma to relieve a minor headache (dosage for young children: 80 mg for every 12 pounds of weight).

Serious problems are rare. Nevertheless, we want you to look for changes in behavior and activity (particularly during the period beginning four-to-six hours after injury and continuing for the next 24 to 48 hours) because these symptoms may be concerning. Please contact us immediately if your child experiences:

- 1) **Extreme drowsiness** (you have difficulty waking your child);
- 2) **Irritability** and/or inconsolable crying;
- 3) **Vomiting**;
- 4) *Other unusual changes*, including (but not limited to) complaints of blurred vision, persisting headache, slurred speech, drainage from ears or nose, unsteady walking or crawling, loss of memory, convulsions, or behaviors that otherwise seem different to you.

If you have any other concerns, please call our office immediately.

*Concussions are more serious. They involve alterations in the functioning of the brain (for example, affecting thinking, memory, problem solving, vision, balance, or the like) that results from direct or indirect trauma to the head. They do not require the loss of consciousness, and are not diagnosed with MRI or CT scan. The two most important symptoms are **persistent headache and an inability to remember events surrounding the injury**. Individuals who have sustained a concussion should be evaluated by us; any athlete who sustains a concussion during sports should not be allowed to return to play until evaluated and cleared by us.*