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## Signs, symptoms and treatment of concussions

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that affects your brain function. Effects are usually temporary but can include headaches and problems with concentration, memory, balance and coordination. Concussions are usually caused by a blow to the head. Violently shaking the head and upper body also can cause concussions.

Some concussions cause you to lose consciousness. It's possible to have a concussion and not realize it. Concussions are particularly common if you play a contact sport, such as football. Most people usually recover fully after a concussion. Your brain has the consistency of gelatin. It's cushioned from everyday jolts and bumps by cerebrospinal fluid inside your skull.

A blow to your head and neck or upper body can cause your brain to slide back and forth forcefully against the inner walls of your skull. Sudden acceleration or deceleration of the head, caused by events such as a car crash or being violently shaken, also can cause brain injury. These injuries affect brain function, usually for a brief period, resulting in signs and symptoms of concussion. This type of brain injury may lead to bleeding in or around your brain, causing symptoms such as prolonged drowsiness and confusion. These symptoms may develop immediately or later. Such as bleeding in your brain can be fatal. That's why anyone who experiences a brain injury needs monitoring in the hours afterward and emergency care if symptoms become worse.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion may include headache or a feeling of pressure in the head, temporary loss of consciousness, vision loss, amnesia surrounding the traumatic event, dizziness or "seeing stars", ringing in the ears, nausea, vomiting, slurred speech, delayed response to questions, and appearing dazed Fatigue.

After your doctor asks detailed questions about your injury, he or she may perform a neurological examination. This evaluation includes checking your vision, hearing, strength and sensation, balance, coordination, and reflexes. If any of the test are failed, you may be diagnosed with a concussion.

Treatment for a concussion depends on how bad your concussion is. You might need surgery or other medical procedures if you have bleeding in the brain, swelling of the brain, a serious injury to the brain. However, most concussions don't require surgery or any major medical treatment. If the concussion is causing headaches, your doctor may recommend over the counter pain relievers such as Advil or Tylenol.

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Your doctor will also probably ask you to get plenty of rest, avoid sports and other strenuous activities, and avoid driving a vehicle or riding a bike for 24 hours or even a few months, depending on the severity of your injury. Alcohol might slow recovery, so ask your doctor if you should avoid drinking it.

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