

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR AFTER A HEAD TRAUMA

With head trauma, there is always a risk that new symptoms or unforeseen complications may suddenly develop in the hours or days following the trauma.

The first 24 hours after the trauma are the most critical, so it is advisable to have someone close to the patient during this period. Go to the hospital immediately or call an ambulance at 112 if you experience any of the symptoms listed below:

- **unusual drowsiness or significant difficulty in waking the person;**
- **persistent or worsening nausea and vomiting;**
- **seizures;**
- **blood or watery discharge from the nose or ears;**
- **increasing headache;**
- **weakness or numbness in the hands or feet, unsteadiness when walking;**
- **confusion or strange behaviour; the patient does not recognise people or their surroundings (they do not know where they are or who they are talking to);**
- **one pupil is larger than the other, or there are visual disturbances.**

Consider raising the head of the bed using a pillow (up to 30 degrees).

In case of swelling, place a cloth-covered ice pack on the swollen area (every 3–4 hours for 20 minutes at a time).

It is recommended to avoid heavy exercise for 2 weeks after a head trauma.

The patient can eat and drink without any special restrictions. **Alcoholic drinks** should not be consumed for at least three days after the trauma.

If possible, do not take painkillers for 24 hours after the trauma. **For very severe pain**, take paracetamol (1–2 tablets; 0.5–1 g) as needed every 4–6 hours, up to a maximum of eight tablets (4 g) per day, divided into individual doses.

Please note! Avoid aspirin and ibuprofen if possible because of their blood-thinning effects!