

# Caring for yourself after a ... Head Injury

**YOU HAVE A HEAD INJURY.** A health care professional has decided that it is safe for you to go home. This leaflet will help you take care of your head injury, and help you and your family/whanau and/or caregivers recognise and deal with problems should they develop.

*The first 24 hours following a head injury is when most serious complications can occur, so it is important that an adult stays with you to make sure that you are okay during this time.*



## Warning signs

You should seek medical help (either go to the hospital or call 111 for an ambulance) if the person with the head injury shows any of these warning signs in the first 24 hours after the injury:

- Is very sleepy or difficult to wake
- Is confused or doesn't recognise you
- Has 'fits' or seizures (repeated jerking movements of the arms, legs or face, even if they have epilepsy)
- Slurs their speech
- Has blurred vision bad enough to stop them from seeing properly
- Is increasingly irritated or restless
- Repeatedly vomits.

## Caring for your head injury

*In the 24 hours following your injury:*

- *Rest as much as possible. Sleep is good but your caregiver should wake you every two hours*
- *Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs*
- *Take your normal prescribed medications*
- *Take paracetamol (eg. Panadol, Panafen, or Pamol) if necessary*
- *Don't drive a motor vehicle or climb ladders*
- *Avoid strenuous activity.*

