

YOUR TODDLER AND HEAD INJURY

Toddlers falling from shopping trolleys are one of the leading causes of head injury in children under the age of 5 years.

If your child has fallen from a shopping trolley, “banged” their head on a hard object as a result of a fall and show signs of unconsciousness (did not cry immediately) you **MUST** take them to a Doctor or the nearest medical emergency clinic as soon as possible.

In all instances where the head gets an injury, parents and carers should err on the side of caution and take the child to be seen by a medical professional.

This is because the impact of hitting a head on a hard surface causes the brain to be shaken inside the head. Just like an injury to any other part of the body, the brain can bruise, swell and bleed, but because the injury is not visible, it is difficult to work out how serious the damage may be.

Children who have had a head injury, but are not admitted to hospital, need to be watched closely for the next 24 hours (even after a check by a Doctor). If any of the following symptoms appear, contact your Doctor immediately.

EFFECTS AND DELAYED EFFECTS OF HEAD INJURY

- Complaints of headaches or pain (crying or grizzly)
- Increasing drowsiness, is hard to wake up
- Irritability – restlessness
- Clumsiness
- Eye pupils of different sizes
- Vomiting more than once
- Has clear fluid coming out of the nose or ears
- Any unusual behaviour

Just as every child is different, so is every head injury. The effects will depend on the area of the brain injury and how badly damaged it is. A child with less serious damage may get better in a few days, other may require weeks or months. Even after rehabilitation, some permanent disability may remain.

Caring with a child with a head injury can be very stressful and tiring. Seek help from family and friends early on. Contact the Brain Injury Waikato for support, education and information and advocacy on your behalf whenever necessary.