

Treating a Concussion

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brief period of unresponsiveness caused by a blow to the head. Someone with a concussion may be confused for a short time. If someone has a head injury, there are six things you should look for;

- Brief loss of responsiveness
- Scalp wound
- Dizziness or nausea
- Loss of memory of events before or during the injury
- Headache
- Confusion



What you need to do

Sit the person down. Hold something cold against the injury such as an ice-pack or bag of frozen ice wrapped in cloth.

Treat any scalp wounds like a bleed, applying pressure to the wound.

Check their level of responsiveness using the AVPU scale.

The AVPU scale

A – Alert: Are their eyes open? Are they alert? Do they respond to questions?

V – Voice: Do they respond to your voice? Can they answer simple questions and respond to instructions?

P – Pain: If they are not alert and not responding to your voice do they respond to pain? Try pinching them, do they move or open their eyes?

U – Unresponsiveness: Do they respond to questions or a gentle shake?

If the person is not alert or responsive, then their head injury may be severe. Call 999/112 and request an ambulance and explain their response to the AVPU scale.

If the person loses responsiveness at any point, open their airway, check their breathing and prepare to treat someone who has become unresponsive by putting the person in the recovery position.



You must not leave the person alone at any point. Continue to monitor the persons breathing, pulse and level of responsiveness. Keep the person still and try to keep them calm. Cover the person lightly with clothing or a blanket to keep them warm. If the person is wearing a helmet do not remove it. If the person shows no signs of circulation, breathing, coughing or movement begin CPR.

Arrange for a doctor to check the person as some head injuries may be delayed for 24-48 hours due to a gradual increase in swelling or bruising around the brain.