

Head Trauma

What is it?

Any damage to the scalp, skull, or brain caused by injury.

Plan of Action:

To give first aid to a person who has head trauma, **call 911 or your local emergency number.**

While waiting for emergency medical help to arrive:

- **Keep the person still.** The injured person should lie down with the head and shoulders slightly elevated. Don't move the person unless necessary. Avoid moving the person's neck. If the person is wearing a helmet, don't remove it.
- **Stop any bleeding.** Apply firm pressure to the wound with sterile gauze or a clean cloth. But don't apply direct pressure to the wound if you suspect a skull fracture.
- **Watch for changes in breathing and alertness.** If the person shows no signs of circulation — no breathing, coughing or movement — begin CPR.

Head trauma that results in concussion symptoms need to be evaluated by a medical professional. Concussion symptoms include nausea, unsteadiness, headaches or difficulty concentrating.

Any of the following symptoms may indicate a serious head injury:

- Severe head or facial bleeding
- Bleeding or fluid leakage from the nose or ears
- Vomiting
- Severe headache
- Change in consciousness for more than a few seconds
- Black-and-blue discoloration below the eyes or behind the ears
- Not breathing
- Confusion
- Agitation
- Loss of balance
- Weakness or an inability to use an arm or leg
- Unequal pupil size
- Slurred speech
- Seizures