



Understand the causes. There are many ways a person can get a concussion, but the leading causes of concussion include playing sports, falls, motor vehicle-related injury, assaults, and being struck by or against an obstacle. If you have a concussion, you should see your doctor.

Present your concussion history. Once you have a concussion, your chances of having another concussion are three to five times greater. Put together a concussion history, so you and your doctor can decide on the best recovery plan for your needs.

Avoid reinjury. As you are recovering from your concussion, avoid activities that might cause reinjury. Repeated concussions may cause second impact syndrome, which often is fatal, or lasting problems with speaking, movement, or learning.

Apply a cold compress. Using a cold compress can reduce swelling. A bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel can be used, but never apply ice directly on your skin, because it is too cold. Apply the compress every two to four hours and leave it in place for 20 to 30 minutes.

Skip the alcoholic beverages. Avoid drinking alcohol until your doctor says it is all right to drink. Alcohol and other drugs may slow your recovery and place you at risk of further injury. Only take drugs that are approved by your health care professional.

Get plenty of rest. Most people fully recover from a concussion with rest. Resting is important after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. There is no specific treatment for concussion other than getting plenty of rest.

Discuss the proper time. Your reflexes may be slower after a concussion. Ask your doctor when you can safely drive a car, ride a bike, or operate heavy equipment. Also speak with your doctor about when you can return to work or school.

Be informed about recovery times. Some people recover from a concussion within a few hours. Other people may take a few weeks to recover. How quickly you recover depends on how severe your concussion was, your age, how healthy you were before your concussion, and how you take care of yourself after the concussion.

TIPS

for Recovering From Concussion

A concussion, the most common type of minor head injury, is a mild form of traumatic brain injury caused by a blow, bump, or jolt to the head. Concussions also can result from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. The following tips can help if you have a concussion.

This page is part of an ongoing series of practical tips for patients with neurologic disorders. If you have compiled clinically relevant tips that you wish to share, please contact the editor at info@neurologyreviews.com.

Tips for Patients are available for download at www.neurologyreviews.com.