



Early Childhood Detection Tool

Detection tool to help recognize head injury/concussion that require a medical consultation for young children. Intended for individuals without medical training*

A worrisome hit to the head for a young child?



Remove the child from the activity

Unless they are unconscious. In this case: never move the child, unless to clear their airway

Never remove their helmet, unless someone is trained to do so



Do not leave the child on their own (for at least 3 hours)



Observe the red flags and the symptoms



Quickly inform parents



Red flags

If at least one red flag is present: **Immediate medical assessment at the emergency** (By ambulance if their health status is concerning)

- ✓ Loss of consciousness
- ✓ Convulsions
- ✓ Confusion or deterioration of conscious state (ex: less reactive or very slow, drowsy, difficulty responding to standard question or recognizing people or places)
- ✓ Unusual behavior (ex: very agitated, combative or irritable, excessive crying)
- ✓ Difficulty moving around, balance difficulties, poor coordination or weakness in the arms or legs
- ✓ Severe or increasing headaches
- ✓ Vision problems
- ✓ Repeated vomiting
- ✓ Visibly deformed skull
- ✓ Intense neck pain
- ✓ Child hit by a motor vehicle
- ✓ Fall of more than:
 - 0.9 m / 3 feet (child younger than 2 years old)
 - 1.5 m / 5 feet (child 2 years or +)
- ✓ Head has been hit hard or by a fast moving object



Frequent symptoms

If there are no red flags present but you observe one or more possible symptoms of a concussion (even of short duration): **Medical assessment** (Ex: with a family doctor or at a walk-in clinic)

- ✓ Seems "elsewhere" or in a daze
- ✓ Thinks or moves more slowly
- ✓ Headaches (rubs or holds head, says they have a headache)
- ✓ Nausea (eats less than usual/has no appetite, says they feel nauseous or sick)
- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Fatigue or a decrease in energy
- ✓ Is irritable or grumpy
- ✓ Wants to be held
- ✓ Stays close to caregivers

You may also notice, immediately or in the following days:

- ✓ Disrupted sleep
- ✓ Nervousness, anxiety
- ✓ Concentration difficulties, distracted
- ✓ Sensitivity to sound or light
- ✓ Developmental regression ("taking a step back" in development)

! If the symptoms worsen in a concerning way: Immediate medical evaluation at the emergency



Lack of symptoms

If there are no red flags or symptoms present, remain vigilant nonetheless for **48 hours** regarding:

Observation to detect the appearance of any red flags or symptoms

Do not allow the child to participate in activities with a risk of contact, collision or falling

After 48 hours, return to regular activities

*This detection tool does not in any way replace professional medical advice or diagnosis. In case of doubt or concerns, it is preferable to consult with a doctor. COCO is a knowledge mobilisation program on concussion in young children. For more information on this program, this tool and to access information or additional tools, visit coco.umontreal.ca.