#### Let's talk about...



# Brain injury: Keeping your child safe after a head injury

It's important to keep your child safe after a brain injury. This helps your child recover while preventing another injury as the brain heals. Because it takes weeks or months for the brain to heal, a second head injury can be more serious and also delay healing. Multiple brain injuries, or concussions, can cause life-long thinking and memory problems.

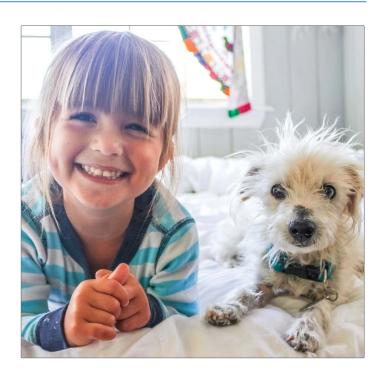
## Why is my child at increased risk for harm after brain injury?

- Your child's brain is more sensitive to injury now, so even a small hit to their head can be harmful.
- Your child may be more impulsive (not thinking before they act) and may get into dangerous situations more easily.
- Your child's balance and coordination may have been affected by the brain injury.
- Your child feels better and does not realize their brain is still healing.

## Why does my child need more supervision now?

You will need to supervise your child closely while their brain heals.

- Your child may need help making safe decisions.
- Your child may need help to relearn or practice good social skills.
- Your child may forget about activities they shouldn't do while healing.
- Your child may not be able to handle peer pressure.



## How can I protect my child and help prevent further injuries?

- Don't let your child participate in impact sports or high-speed activities until their healthcare provider says it's okay.
- · Establish clear rules.
- Help your child avoid dangerous situations by driving them to school and keeping guns, knives, or unsafe tools out of their reach.
- Use positive reminders such as, "Please walk" instead of "Don't run."
- Praise and point out good behavior.
- Have a buddy system to help your child get to school, walk between classes, and support them when needed.
- In order to make good decisions, make sure your child rests at home and school so they are not tired or overwhelmed.

- Have your child play with friends at your home so you can closely watch them.
- Consider finding an aide to help your child at school.
- Make an emergency plan with your child for when they feel worried or unsafe.
- Don't allow your teen to drive until the doctor says it's okay.
- Always have your child sit in their car seat or booster seat or use a seatbelt.

#### How can I help my child make good choices?

- Role-play situations with your child so they can practice making good choices.
- Talk to your child's babysitters, daycare, teachers, and coaches about their brain injury and how to help your child be safe and succeed.
- Post signs around the house with reminders to turn off the stove, unplug the iron, or turn off the water.
- Teach your child's siblings and friends how to help your child.

**Remember:** The most important thing you can do for your child after a brain injury is keep them safe and protect their brain from more injury.

#### What are some activities my child can do while they heal?

- Read books
- Do schoolwork
- Do puzzles, Sudoku, or other brain teasers
- · Walk or hike
- Do strength training, including squats, lunges, and sit-ups
- Do yoga
- Play golf
- Snowshoe
- Swim laps (no water play, jumping, or diving)
- Play card games
- Do memory games
- Plant a garden
- Learn a musical instrument

Notes		