

Initial Assessment

Priorities in the initial stabilization phase of a child with a head injury include assessment of the CAB; neurologic examination focusing on mental status, pupillary responses, and motor responses; and assessment for spinal cord injury. The assessment is carried out quickly in relation to vital signs (see [Emergency Treatment box](#)).

Emergency Treatment

Head Injury

1. Assess child:

C: Circulation

A: Airway

B: Breathing

Neurologic and thermoregulatory status

2. Stabilize neck and spine immediately. Use jaw thrust, not chin lift, to open airway.
3. Clean any abrasions with soap and water.
 - Apply clean dressing.
 - If child is bleeding, apply pressure and then ice to relieve pain and swelling.
4. Keep child NPO until instructed otherwise.
5. Assess pain but do not give analgesics or sedatives.
6. Check pupil reaction every 4 hours (including twice during