

- Difficulty arousing child from sleep
- Difficulty speaking
- Blurred vision or diplopia
- Unsteady gait
- Difficulty using extremities, weakness, or incoordination
- Neck pain or stiffness
- Pupils dilated, unequal, or fixed
- Infant with bulging fontanel
- Seizures

LOC, Level of consciousness; *NPO*, nothing by mouth.

Nursing Alert

Deep, rapid, periodic, or intermittent and gasping respirations; wide fluctuations or noticeable slowing of the pulse; and widening pulse pressure or extreme fluctuations in blood pressure are signs of brainstem involvement. Marked hypotension may represent internal injuries.

Ocular signs such as fixed, dilated, and unequal pupils; fixed and constricted pupils; and pupils that are poorly reactive or nonreactive to light and accommodation indicate increased ICP or brainstem involvement. It is important to remain with the patient who demonstrates fixed and dilated pupils because these are ominous signs with a high probability of respiratory arrest. Dilated, nonpulsating blood vessels indicate increased ICP before the appearance of papilledema. Retinal hemorrhages are seen in acute