

Head injuries

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

How to treat head injuries

Head injuries are the result of trauma to the skull, scalp or brain. Injuries to the head are potentially dangerous and always require medical attention.

What to do

Unconscious casualty

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Urgent medical aid. Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.
3. Place the casualty into the recovery position being careful to support the casualty's head and neck in neutral alignment during movement to avoid any twisting action.
4. If any blood or fluid is coming from the ear, place injured side down to allow the fluid to drain, place a clean pad between ear and ground and observe the amount draining.
5. Monitor for any changes in signs, symptoms and level of consciousness and ensure the airway is kept clear and open.
6. Control any bleeding, but do not apply direct pressure to the skull.

Conscious casualty

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Rest and reassure the casualty.
3. If NO suspected neck or spinal injury, place casualty in a comfortable position with head and shoulders slightly raised.
4. If neck or spinal injuries are suspected, protect the neck whilst maintaining a clear airway, keep the casualty flat and support the head on either side to stop movement; improvise using rolled towels, blankets or clothing.
5. Observe for any changes in signs, symptoms and level of consciousness.
6. Urgent medical aid. Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.

Caused by

Skull fracture from direct force e.g. blow to the head or indirect force e.g. a fall from height.

Concussion – altered state of consciousness.

Compression – excess pressure on part of the brain.

Signs and symptoms

Change in conscious level.

Headache, nausea, vomiting.

Loss of memory.

Altered or abnormal responses to commands or touch, such as irritability, confusion.

Twitching, noisy breathing.

Wounds to the scalp or face.

Blood or fluid from the ear.

Dizziness.

Blurred vision.