TRAUMA
Emergency Department Discharge Instructions
Following a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (Concussion)

Date of injury: _______________________________  Date seen in Emergency: _______________________________

___________________________ has been examined and can return home at this time. However, certain symptoms
may appear within 72 hours following the injury. If any of the following develop, please return to the Emergency Department:
• Excessive drowsiness; if you find your child extremely sleepy or difficult to arouse
• Persistent vomiting
• One pupil becoming larger than the other
• Increasing headache
• Difficulty seeing, hearing, speaking, or walking
• Persistent irritability (especially in younger children)
• Seizure

If you have concerns after leaving the Emergency Department, do not hesitate to return.

Signs and symptoms of a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) usually last 2 to 3 weeks but can last longer.

Common symptoms include: headaches, dizziness, nausea, difficulty sleeping and fatigue.

Other symptoms include: behavioural changes (irritability, anxiety/stress), difficulty with memory, concentration and attention,
sensitivity to light, sound and motion.

A period of physical and cognitive rest until symptoms have fully resolved is extremely important.
This reduces the likelihood of persistent symptoms.

In order to manage headaches, analgesics such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen can be taken regularly for 3-5 days as needed.
CHECK LABELS FOR DOSAGE INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS. If still needed after 3-5 days, REDUCE to no more than 3
doses per week. If in doubt, consult your pediatrician, family doctor or CLSC.

Activity restrictions and recommendations during the recovery period:
• Inform school, teachers, and coaches of the MTBI sustained and the restrictions in place
• No school for 2 days, then progress to half days and finally full days as tolerated
• No academic exams, tests, quizzes, projects or oral presentations until symptoms have resolved and then increase gradually as tolerated
• No gym, sports or other strenuous activities (should not be in the same room during class)
• Do not attend sport practices as they may interfere with the resting period
• Do not attend music classes or music lessons
• Avoid activities such as computers, video games, texting, watching television and playing musical instruments as these activities may provoke headaches
• Supervised leisure swimming is permitted, but no diving or jumping into the water
• Adequate rest and breaks are encouraged
• Ensure supervision in the schoolyard to prevent re-injury
• Allow the student to bring a water bottle to class; dehydration may provoke headaches

Additional recommendations for adolescents:
• Avoid going to parties or movies in theatres as the excessive noise and light may provoke headaches
• Adolescents must avoid driving until symptoms have resolved
• Absolutely no alcohol or drugs

Other specific restrictions: _______________________________________________________________

The child or adolescent must be completely symptom free at rest for one week prior to resuming physical activity. At that point, gradual return to physical activity over a few days is recommended. For additional information refer to the Mild Traumatic Brain Injury brochure or visit the MCH Trauma website at www.thechildren.com/trauma or contact MCH Trauma at 514-412-4400 extension 23310.

Emergency Department MD Signature: ______________________________________________________

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