

# First Aid – Managing Head Injuries

When presented with a student, staff member or other person who has sustained a knock or impact to their head it is often difficult to ascertain the severity and the appropriate action to take, including when to call an ambulance. Although some bumps to the head will not result in an obvious injury, any **head injury** requires medical attention as the brain is the control centre for the body.

**If there is any doubt that the person may have sustained a head injury, medical attention must be sought by calling 000 and requesting ambulance assistance.**

Use this summary and flow chart, in conjunction with your first aid procedures and in line with your first aid training. This information can be duplicated and displayed in your first aid area.

**Head Injuries** can include concussion, a fractured skull, cerebral compression and other brain damage.

**Signs and Symptoms** of a head injury may include (but are not limited to): loss of, or an altered level of, consciousness; confusion or memory loss; irritability or agitation; any obvious wounds or deformities; bleeding or clear fluid from the head; slurring, lack of coordination; bruising around the edges of the eyes and behind the ears; seizures; change in size or shape of pupils.

*Note: With any head injury there is the potential to be an associated neck/spinal injury*

## In summary –

	Ensure immediate first aid attention is provided.
	Seek the advice of qualified first aid officer regarding the initial management of the injury. Use the Management of Head Injuries flowchart to assist.
	Remember that signs and symptoms are not always immediately present or obvious.
	If the casualty is displaying any signs and symptoms of concussion or a head injury, or if there is any concerns about the condition of the casualty, call 000) immediately and request an ambulance.
	If an ambulance has been called, follow the advice of the Queensland Ambulance Service Emergency Medical Dispatcher.
	DO NOT give analgesics as these can disguise signs and symptoms of a more serious injury.
	Protect the neck and spine and ensure the airway is clear.
	Contact the parents/carers immediately following ANY head injury sustained by a student.
	Ensure appropriate supervision by an adult until the ambulance arrives or until the casualty is collected by a parent/carer if injury sustained by a student.  If injury sustained by an adult they should also be supervised until medical care is obtained.
	Ensure a record is kept of the injury and the actions taken e.g. first aid record / incident record.

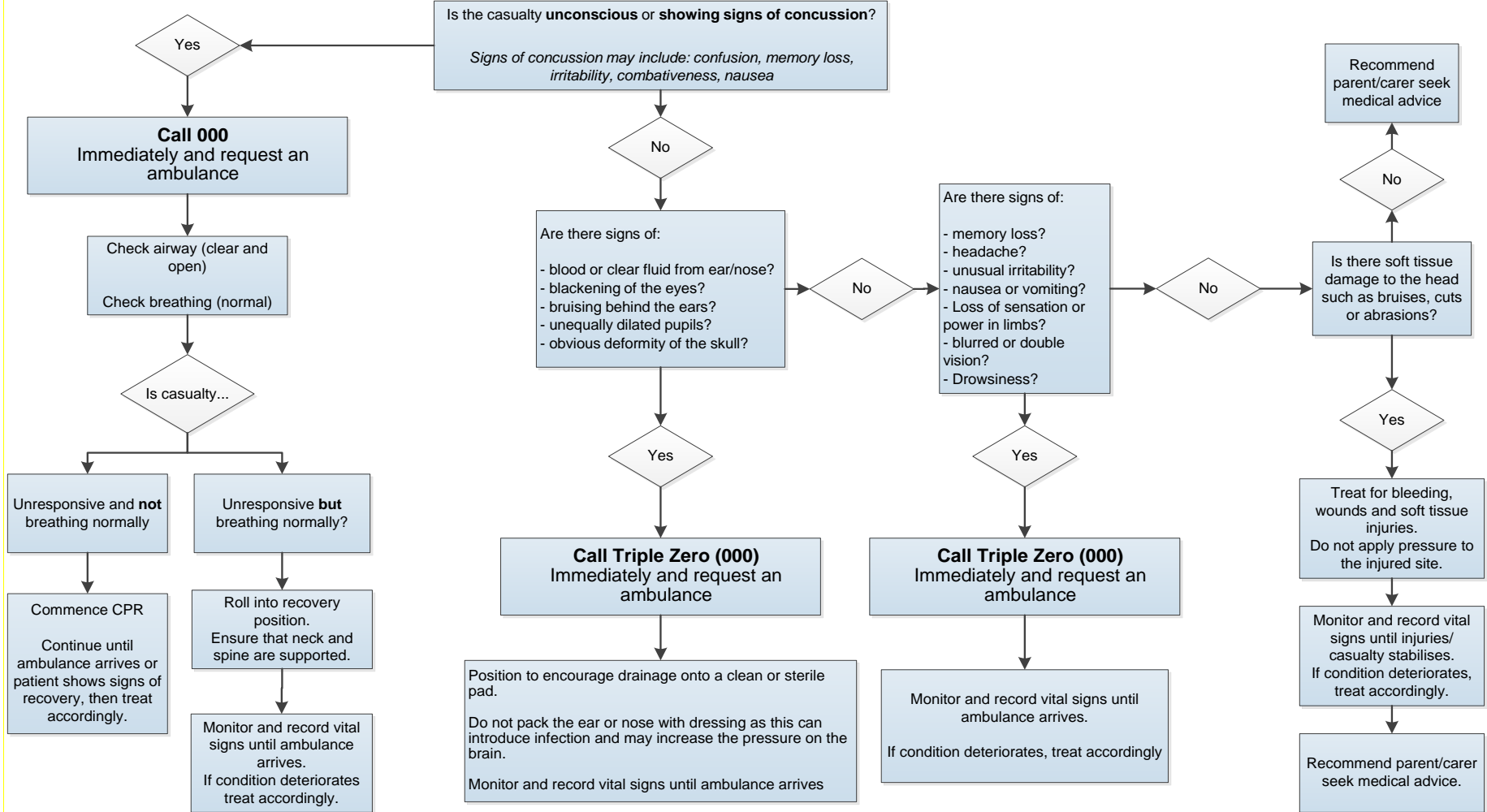
This information has been developed in consultation with Queensland Ambulance Service.  
For more information:

- Refer to [First Aid](#).
- Contact Regional [Senior Health and Safety Consultants](#) for health and safety enquiries.

# Head Injury

E.g. concussion, fracture, whiplash, fall involving the head

## See information sheet – Calling an ambulance



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