

PATIENT AND FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

Liver or Spleen Injury

What is a liver or spleen injury?

- The liver and spleen are solid organs in the abdomen.
- They are the two most commonly damaged organs in children who have had an injury to their abdomen.
- Injuries to these solid organs are usually from some type of blunt force.
 - e.g. from the handlebars of a bike
- Injuries can also be due to penetrating injury.
 - e.g. from a stab wound

Semi-circular bruise to the belly from bicycle handlebars.

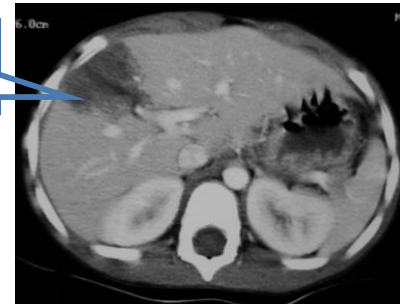


How do I know if my child has a liver or spleen injury?

Here are some of the symptoms your child may have:

- Belly pain
- Bruising, scratches or different colors to the belly
- Belly is swollen or hard
- Vomiting
- Pain in the left shoulder
- Fast heart rate or pale skin

Computerized tomography (CT) scan showing a liver injury.



How is a liver or spleen injury treated?

Most of these injuries do not need surgery.

What is the recovery time?

- Recovery from a liver or spleen injury takes weeks.
- It is very important to rest and prevent re-injury.
- Re-injury to the liver or spleen can be very serious!
- Re-injury can cause bleeding, a longer recovery time, and the need to be re-admitted to the hospital and/or surgery.
- Until the liver or spleen injury is completely healed, certain activities will need to be avoided.

When can we go home?

- Some children may be evaluated at the hospital and sent home the same day.
- How long your child will stay in the hospital depends on the severity of the injury.
- Your child's provider will assess your child and decide how long they need to stay in the hospital and when they can return to activities.

What can my child do?

- Quiet activities. Your child does not need to stay in bed. They should walk and take part in calm quiet play.
- TV, movies, hand-held video games. No Wii Fit™ or other physically interactive games.
- Walking.
- Gentle swimming; avoid ocean swimming, wave pools and slides
- **Continue to use child safety seats, booster seats, and seatbelts-this is very important!**



PATIENT AND FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What activities should my child avoid?

- Lifting anything heavier than 5 pounds.
- Gym class or recess.
- Individual or team sports such as football, lacrosse, rugby, baseball/softball, soccer, hockey, skiing, gymnastics/cheerleading, karate, aerobics, basketball, or other contact sports.
- Bikes, scooters, skating, skateboarding.
- Running or jogging.
- Playing on playground equipment.
- Roller coasters, bumper cars, water parks, or amusement park rides.
- Activities that make your child get out of breath or sweaty.
- Activities that increase the risk of falling, body contact, getting tired, bumping into people/objects/pets.

How long will my child's activities be limited?

- Your child will be on activity restriction until your provider decides that your child is safe to resume normal activity.

What should I watch out for at home?

If your child experiences any of the following, please take your child to the emergency department:

- Fainting, dizzy or weak
- Pale skin color
- Shortness of breath
- Breathing too fast
- Child feeling that their heart is beating too fast or child's pulse seems to be fast
- Wetting diapers or peeing less than normal (once or twice a day)

If your child experiences any of the following, please call our office:

- Worsening or severe belly pain
- Belly swelling
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain not controlled by pain medicines

Your child will need to follow up with the surgeon or trauma team.

You will receive specific instructions for follow up when your child is discharged.

Please don't hesitate to call our office if you have any problems or concerns.

Surgical provider: _____

Office Number: _____

After hours number, if applicable: _____

Thank you for allowing us to care for your child.