

Case Study
Chapter 37, Disorders of Brain Function

An 8-year-old boy is admitted to the emergency room after being hit by a car. He had a short period of unconsciousness and is currently lethargic but arouseable. He complains of nausea but has not vomited. He does not remember the accident or what happened immediately before.

On the initial nursing assessment he is oriented X3, slightly lethargic but responds to name. BP 130/80, P 88, R 16. Pupils are equal and reactive to light.

The admitting diagnosis is concussion.

1. On the admission assessment, the nurse notes the physician described the child had a coup-contrecoup injury. Describe what this means and why this could impact the nursing assessment of this patient.

2. On the CT scan, the child is found to have a subdural hematoma. The child was taken to surgery. Describe physiologically what is meant by a subdural hematoma. What nursing assessments would the nurse monitor in this patient?

(Learning Objectives 7, 8, 9, 10)