Discharge Instructions for Concussion/Closed Head Injury Patients

You have been diagnosed with a concussion or closed head injury. A concussion results in *temporary* loss of normal brain function. Concussions are normally caused by motor vehicle and bicycle accidents, or by falls around the home. These instructions provide additional information regarding your care at home.

**Activity**
- You will need to have someone with you for the next several days to watch for worsening of symptoms (see below) and to allow you to rest.
- Start with light activity around the house for the first 3 days you are home.
- Gradually increase your activity starting with short walks 1-2 times per day.
- Avoid contact sports, skating, bike riding, or other such activities for 6 weeks.
- You may **not** drive until cleared by your neurosurgeon.

**Nutrition**
- Avoid alcoholic beverages for the next 6 weeks.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables to prevent constipation.

**Medications**
- Take your medications as prescribed and gradually decrease pain medications as your pain improves.

**Follow-up**
- If you have not already been scheduled for a follow-up appointment, call your neurosurgeon when you get home to schedule your follow-up appointment.
- Follow up with your primary care physician for all medical issues.

Call your doctor or return to the emergency room if you experience any of the following symptoms:
- Clear or bloody drainage from your nose or ears
- Worsening headache
- Changes in vision or differently sized pupils
- Seizure activity or jerking / twitching of the face, arms, or legs
- Sleepiness or difficulty waking up
- Memory loss
- Irritability
- Nausea or vomiting that won’t stop
- Confusion or difficulty talking
- A fever above 100 degrees F
- Arm, leg, or facial weakness
- Difficulty walking, loss of balance, and dizziness
- Stiff neck