Minor Blunt Head Trauma Algorithm

Trauma within last 24 hr, GCS 14-15, age >16

Objective to identify injuries requiring intervention
-applies to those with LOC, amnesia, or disorientation
-not applicable to patients on anticoagulants

CT indicated if any of below:

Suspected skull fracture
Vomiting x2/+  
age >64 yr
physical sign of basilar skull fx
GCS <15 2 hr post injury
dangerous mechanism of injury*

Stiell IG et al. The Canadian CT Head Rule for Patients with Minor Head Injury. Lancet. 2001 May 5;357(9266):1391-6

* Dangerous mechanism defined as: 
pedestrian struck by motor vehicle, occupant ejected from motor vehicle, fall from height >3 feet or 5 stairs

This guideline was ratified by the emergency department faculty at Maine Medical Center in February 2010. It reflects our expert opinion and is not necessarily applicable to all institutions. It is intended to be a reference for clinicians caring for patients and is not intended to replace providers’ clinical judgment.

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