

Subdural Hematoma

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A subdural hematoma is caused by pooling blood between the outer covering of your brain (dura mater) and the surface of your brain. This happens when blood vessels break and leak.

It can happen quickly (with a traumatic head injury) or slowly (with smaller head injuries) with symptoms being new or happening over the last few weeks.

This can be a life-threatening condition.

Risks

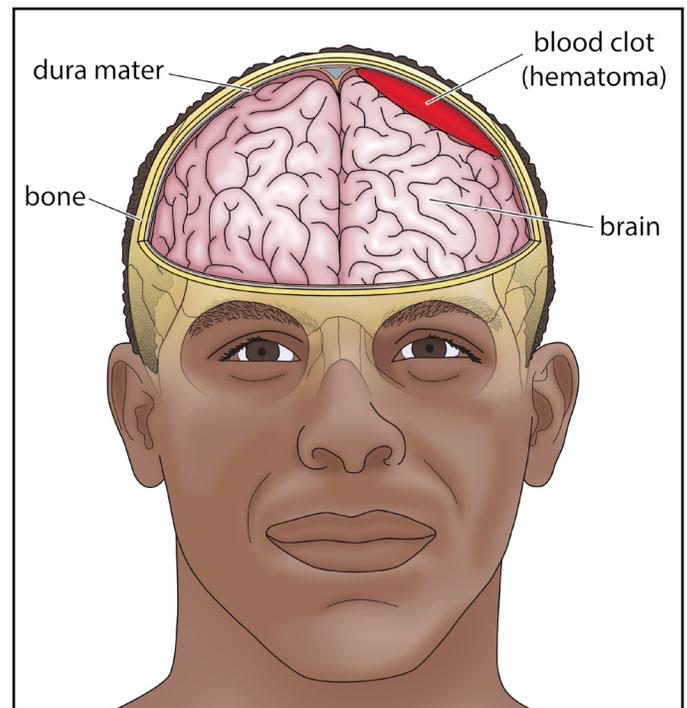
You are at risk:

- as you get older
- if you take blood-thinning medicines (such as warfarin or aspirin)
- if you abuse alcohol
- if you have a blood-clotting disorder
- if you have had head injuries.

Symptoms

Symptoms can include the following:

- headache
- weakness on one side or part of your body
- problems with memory
- upset stomach (nausea) or throwing up (vomiting)



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A subdural hematoma happens between the outer covering of your brain and the surface of your brain.

- balance issues or dizziness
- being sensitive to light or sounds
- feeling hazy, foggy or groggy
- problems concentrating
- confusion
- not “feeling right”
- seizures.

(over)

How to Confirm

To confirm the bleeding and attempt to find its source, the doctor may want you to have:

- **CT or CAT scan (computerized axial tomography).** This test uses X-ray and a computer for an in-depth, cross-sectional look at the brain.
- **MRI scan (magnetic resonance imaging).** This test uses a magnetic field to get a 3-D view of your brain. This scan can give information about the tissues and blood vessels within your brain.

You will receive information about what will happen during the tests, and what to expect after the tests.

Treatment

Your treatment will depend on how bad the bleeding is and may include surgery versus observation.

□ Burr hole

- The surgeon will drill one or more small holes in your skull to remove fluid or blood.

□ Craniotomy

- The surgeon removes part of your skull to drain fluid or blood and to reduce pressure. The skull is replaced during surgery.

□ Craniectomy

- The surgeon removes part of your skull to drain fluid or blood. Some patients have the skull replaced later after the brain swelling has gone down.
- This is usually done for severe brain injuries or for lots of bleeding and swelling.

□ Medicine

- You may receive medicine to:
 - prevent or control seizures
 - control pain.
- If you were taking blood-thinning medicine, your health care provider may change the dose or stop the medicine.

When to Go to the Emergency Department or Call 911

Go to an Emergency Department or call 911 right away if:

- you “black out” or lose consciousness
- you have blurry or double vision
- you have a seizure
- you have weakness in your arms or legs
- any of your current symptoms get worse
- you have any new symptoms.

Do not drive yourself. Ask a family member or friend to drive.