Isolated Head Trauma
Neurosurgery Consultation Referral Guidelines

Clinical Presentation

- **GCS = 15**
  AND evidence of:
  - No visible skull fracture
  - No neurological deficit

- **GCS = 14-15**
  AND evidence of one or more of:
  - Open skull fracture
  - Mild focal neurological deficit
    - With/without headache

- **GCS ≤ 13**
  AND evidence of one or more of:
  - Penetrating head injury
  - Rapid onset, progressive neurological deterioration
  If no CT/MR scan services available but significant neurological deficit (GCS <12), seek consultation through CritiCall Ontario prior to arranging for transfer for CT/MR imaging.

Imaging: Abnormal CT/MRI Findings

CT/MRI images should be interpreted by the local radiologist prior to seeking neurosurgical consultation via CritiCall Ontario, unless the hospital does not have CT/MRI services.

- **AND evidence of one or more of:**
  - Chronic subdural hematoma
  - Closed, linear skull fracture

- **AND evidence of one or more of:**
  - Intracerebral hemorrhage
  - Acute subdural hematoma
  - Epidural hematoma
  - Brain contusion
  - Chronic subdural hematoma
  - Confirmation of skull fracture
  - Diffuse brain injury (i.e., brain swelling, cisternal or sulcal obliteration)

- **AND evidence of one or more of:**
  - Intracerebral hematoma
  - Acute subdural hematoma
  - Epidural hematoma
  - Brain contusion
  - Diffuse brain injury (i.e., brain swelling, cisternal or sulcal obliteration)

Referral Directive

Next Morning Referral
Emergent/Urgent
Life or Limb

**CONSULT WITH NEUROSURGEON NEXT MORNING (7 AM)**

**Local arrangements can be made to determine the preferred time to consult with a neurosurgeon for Next Morning Referrals.**

Disease Specific Management

**ISOLATED HEAD TRAUMA:**
- Give DILANTIN 15-20 mg/kg if documented seizure or GCS ≤ 8.
- Give Mannitol 1.5g/kg for suspected raised ICP.
- Do not use steroids for raised ICP.
- Assume C-Spine injury and maintain spine precautions.
- If penetrating object, stabilize but do not remove.

CALL CRITICALL ONTARIO
1-800-668-4357

The criteria are intended as guidelines. Providers are to rely on their clinical judgement for each individual patient encounter.