

# HEAD INJURY

The CT scan WITHOUT contrast is your test of choice.

## Canadian Head CT Rule

GCS <15 (measured 2 hours post injury)

Suspected open or depressed skull fracture

Evidence of basilar skull fracture

>2 episodes of vomiting

Age >65

>30 minutes of retrograde amnesia prior to event

“Dangerous” mechanism

Ejected from car

Pedestrian hit by car

Fall from >3 feet

## Approach to Head Injury

### 1) Write Out Differential (The Big 5)

Skull Fracture (External and Basilar)

Epidural Hematomas

Subdural Hematomas

Traumatic Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Parenchymal Injury (especially concussion)

### 2) Important Parts of History

Specific Mechanism

Loss of Consciousness

Blood Thinners/Anti-platelet Medicines

### 3) Important Parts of Exam

GCS

Pupils

Basilar Skull

### 4) Calculate Canadian Head CT Rule

(See Sidebar)

### References

Wright DW, Merck LH. Head Trauma. In: Tintinalli JE, Stapczynski J, Ma O, Yealy DM, Meckler GD, Cline DM. eds. *Tintinalli's Emergency Medicine: A Comprehensive Study Guide, 8e*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill; 2016. <http://accessemergencymedicine.mhmedical.com/content.aspx?bookid=1658&Sectionid=109445450>. Accessed September 08, 2016.