



Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Information

Note:

Traumatic brain injury can occur without any outward signs of injury to the head.

What is traumatic brain injury?

- The head is jolted and the brain moves rapidly within the skull
- The head is hit directly or indirectly causing harm to the brain
- An object breaks the skull and physically passes into the brain

Not all blows or jolts to the head result in TBI. When TBI occurs, the injury may be "mild," (a brief change in mental status or consciousness) or "severe," (an extended period of unconsciousness or memory loss after the injury). If you have a TBI, you may have problems remembering, making decisions, solving problems, driving a car, balancing a checkbook, dressing and bathing, etc. These problems may last for a short time or for a long time.

What causes TBI?

Blast are the leading cause of TBI for active duty military personnel in war zones.

The leading causes of TBI in the U.S. are:

- Falls
- Motor vehicle-traffic crashes
- Struck by/against events
- Assaults

Symptoms of Mild TBI

Headaches
Balance problems or dizziness
Memory problems or lapses
Sleep problems
Sensitivity to bright light
Irritability

Note:

Symptoms of mild TBI often go away within hours to days and almost always improve over 1 - 3 months.

However, if symptoms persist and do not improve, you should seek medical treatment.



Safety First

Until you are better, avoid activities that can lead to a 2nd brain injury such as contact or extreme sports. Remember to use helmets and safety belts to decrease your risk of having a 2nd brain injury.

How you can help with recovery from TBI:

- Get plenty of sleep at night, and don't overexert yourself during the day.
- Return to normal activities little by little, not all at once.
- Don't drink alcohol; it may slow your brain recovery and puts you at further risk of injury.

To help you remember:

1. Write things down that you want to remember.
2. If you find you are losing important items, begin putting them in the same place all of the time.
3. Park in the same place so you can find your car.
4. Keep a note book to write down important information.
5. Ask others to help remind you of important dates/times.
6. If you are easily distracted or having trouble concentrating, try doing only one thing at a time in a quiet environment.
7. If you feel irritable, remove yourself from the situation that is irritating you. Use relaxation techniques to help manage the situation. You may be more irritable when you are tired, so be sure to get enough rest.
8. Keep your brain active by doing things that require thinking and fine motor skills, like crossword puzzles, playing a musical instrument, drawing, writing, painting, playing cards or board games.



Please Note:

If your symptoms continue, tell your primary medical provider. You may need more testing to find out if you have TBI or if there is another cause for your symptoms.



You are the most important member of the recovery team. Please share your concerns, ideas, and questions with us about your recovery. We want you to ask questions and be involved in decisions that affect your treatment.

Be patient Healing from a brain injury takes time.