
Anticipated symptoms your child may display

The severity of symptoms depends on whether it is a mild or moderate TBI

Mild TBI has symptoms that appear immediately or soon after the injury, and are temporary

Moderate TBI displays similar symptoms, with greater severity potentially lasting for months

Cognitive symptoms: concentration and memory problems

Physical symptoms: headaches, insomnia, seizures, blurred vision and tiredness

Behavioural changes: depression, anxiety, trouble sleeping and loss of motivation

Symptoms may include:

- headaches
- pain
- seizures
- dizziness
- vertigo- feeling of moving or spinning
- trouble sleeping
- coordination difficulties
- blurred vision
- attention or memory problems

Contact your medical professional to talk about these symptoms. Keeping your doctor involved is important and keep a close relationship with them during recovery

Returning to school

Mental and physical rest are recommended to help with the healing process - this might require missing school or reducing homework load

- **NO ACTIVITY, ONLY REST.** Child should miss school, reduce cognitive workload and avoid physical activity until symptoms are gone
- **LIGHTENED WORKLOAD.** Child can attend school- might need reduced attendance, reduce homework load, and participate only in light physical activity such as walking
- **RESUME ACTIVITIES.** Child is no longer displaying any symptoms, regular homework load and activities can resume, but still refrain from contact sports
- **REGULAR ACTIVITIES.** Child has received full medical clearance to resume contact sports (if they play). Can perform all normal daily activities



“I thought I was alone, but I’m not. There are many families who have had to go through this and understand.”
- Mother of child with TBI

Traumatic Brain Injury & Your Child

A parent’s guide to TBI



General Information

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is an injury to the brain caused by the head being hit by something or shaken violently

Most recover fully with no long-term effects. The causes for brain injury vary by age

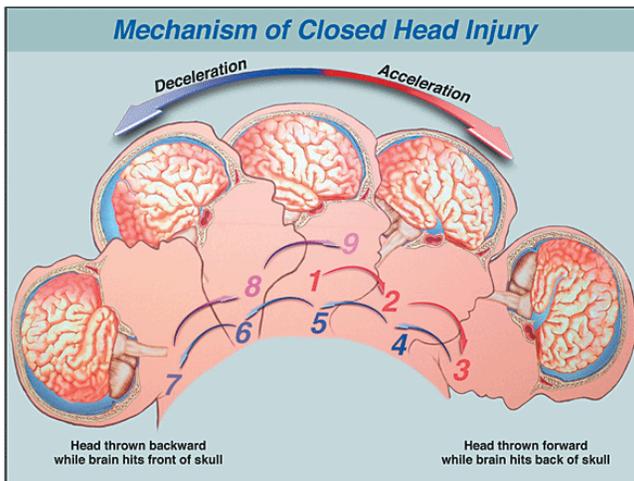
For infants, accidents are the leading cause

For toddlers, falls and motor vehicle crashes are the leading causes. Children are often injured as a pedestrian or bicyclist. Motor vehicle crashes or passenger-related injuries are common causes of brain injury in children and adolescents

Types of Traumatic Brain Injuries:

Open TBI: the skull is penetrated or open in some way

Closed TBI: the skull remains intact



	Loss of Consciousness	Brain Imaging	Lasting Symptoms
Mild 	Will not lose consciousness	May not show on brain images	May not have lasting symptoms
	May not lose consciousness	May not show on brain images	May not have lasting symptoms
	May lose consciousness for 20-30 mins	May show on brain images	May have lasting symptoms
	Moderate	Loses consciousness for less than 24 hours	Most likely to show on brain images

Activities for your child to avoid after a TBI

Wait until all symptoms are gone before returning to normal activities

- Avoid physically demanding activity
- Do not participate in contact or recreational sports until physician says it is safe to restart
- Avoid drugs/alcohol which can slow recovery and worsen symptoms

Things your child might tell you they feel:

- feeling “off” or “weird” or “dazed”
- having blurred vision
- feeling pressure in their head
- feeling irritable, sad, nervous or more emotional
- feeling sensitive to light or noise

If you hear these complaints talk to your doctor

Typical healing responses

Here are the levels of typical healing responses that a child or teen may go through

NOTE: Previous concussion or other types of brain injury put people at risk for a longer recovery

After 6 weeks: the most rapid recovery for a TBI occurs during this period. Bruising and swelling disappears during first 6 weeks. Child typically returns to school within 3-4 weeks. Talk to your physician for a specific timeline

After 3 months: your child may still experience difficulties with coordination, understanding information, attention and memory

After 6 months: improvement becomes less obvious. Most children experience a full recovery by 6 months, but some continue to have difficulties with coordination and experience other symptoms like continued headaches

Preventing TBI in your child

- Use appropriate car seats and ensure a seatbelt is worn
- Always wear a helmet when on a bicycle and scooter
- Wear properly fitted and maintained helmet and mouth guard when participating in contact sports
- Avoid physical altercations and rough housing
- Be cautious in and around swimming areas
- Proper parental supervision for child’s age
- Avoid drug/alcohol consumption as they can cause accidents