

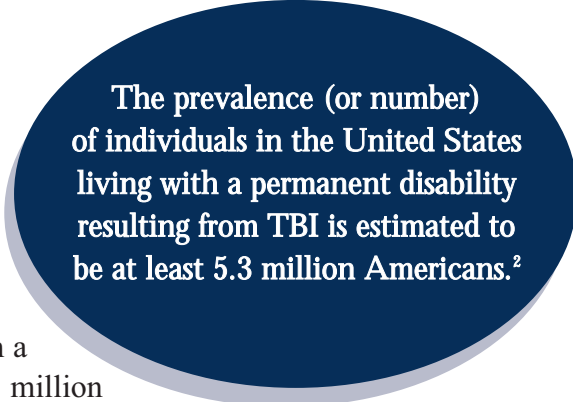
Traumatic Brain Injury Facts: Neurobehavioral Health

What is a Traumatic Brain Injury?

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is an injury to the head arising from blunt or penetrating trauma such as falls or gunshot wounds or from acceleration-deceleration forces such as motor vehicle crashes or shaken baby syndrome. A TBI is one of two subtypes of acquired brain injury. The other subtype, non-TBI, is a result of a medical condition, including cerebrovascular disorders (e.g., stroke), neurologic diseases, brain tumors, and toxic chemical or drug reactions. Loss of oxygen to the brain (e.g., anoxia) may occur in either of these subtypes. Regardless of what caused the brain injury, the person experiencing the injury may present with physical or cognitive symptoms or signs which may lead to behavioral changes and some level of long-term disability.

How many people does TBI affect?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated that nearly 1.1 million people are treated for TBI and released from hospital emergency departments, 50,000 people die, and 235,000 people are hospitalized and survive each year.¹ Of those who survive, an estimated 80,000 to 90,000 people will experience the onset of long-term disability as a result of TBI. The prevalence (or number) of individuals in the United States living with a permanent disability resulting from TBI is estimated to be at least 5.3 million Americans.²



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In the Children's Health Act of 2000 (P. L. 106-310), Congress recognized that the estimated figure of 5.3 million is an under-count of the number of individuals who have actually incurred a TBI. This figure is based on the number of individuals discharged from a hospital following an overnight stay and does not include individuals who are seen in emergency departments but not admitted to hospitals, individuals who have visited physicians' offices, or individuals who have not sought treatment for a head injury. It also does not include those who are living with other acquired brain injuries described above.

What are the neurobehavioral issues following TBI?

Throughout the TBI recovery process, cognitive, physical, and perceptual changes may occur affecting how the person who sustained the injury experiences the world and interprets events. These changes affect how the person interacts and responds behaviorally.

- £ Cognitive Example: If a person has difficulty processing or remembering information, the person may behave in a fashion that gives the impression that he or she does not care, is not motivated, or is resistant to help.
- £ Physical Example: If a person experiences headaches and fatigue, the person's level of frustration tolerance may be lowered causing him or her to act out in anger.