TBI Online Training

[www.mitbitraining.org](http://www.mitbitraining.org)
info@mitbitraining.org

The three free training courses aim to provide current information that educates and promotes awareness of the causes, symptoms, and treatment of traumatic brain injury (TBI). Additionally, a list of resources for individuals with TBI can be found on the Resource Links page.

Those that may find the training helpful include service providers, educators, policy makers, advocates, caregivers, and the general public. Visit the website for a list of free continuing education credits available to training participants.

Many other free educational materials are available at [www.michigan.gov/tbi](http://www.michigan.gov/tbi) including:

- Resources for Veterans and their Families
- Resources for Persons with Brain Injury and their Families

This brochure is supported in part by Grant H21MC06747 from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. The contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of DHHS.

200 copies printed at $.2759 each; total cost of $55.18.

MDCH is an Equal Opportunity Employer; Services and Programs Provider
**BRAIN INJURY DEFINED**

A brain injury refers to anything that causes brain cell death and loss of function.

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is defined as a bump, blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain. Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of such an injury may range from “mild,” i.e., a brief change in mental status or consciousness to “severe,” i.e., an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury. A TBI can result in short or long-term problems with independent function (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/TBI).

**ABOUT CONCUSSION**

Concussion is a mild TBI. The person may or may not lose consciousness for a short time. Some people are simply dazed or confused.

- With proper diagnosis and management, most people recover fully, but long-term, serious consequences are possible.
- The effects of multiple concussions may be cumulative.

**RECOGNIZING TBI**

A brain injury may cause symptoms that appear to fit other diagnostic categories or disabilities and may not be recognized by those providing services. If someone you care for or work with shows symptoms described in this brochure, ask:

**Have you ever hit your head or been hit on the head?**

Prompt the person to think about incidents that occurred at any age, such as:
- Car/bicycle crashes
- Falls
- Assault
- Child abuse/domestic violence
- Sports accidents
- Military service-related injuries

**Were you ever seen in the emergency room, hospital, or by a doctor because of an injury to your head?**

**Did you ever lose consciousness or experience a period of being confused because of an injury to your head?**

**CHARACTERISTICS OF BRAIN INJURY**

Just as each individual is unique, so is each brain injury. Problems may or may not be permanent.

**PHYSICAL PROBLEMS**
- Headache/pain
- Stiffness/weakness
- Lack of coordination/balance
- Problems with sleep/fatigue
- Problems with planning movement
- Problems with swallowing/dressing/walking
- Seizures
- Slurred speech/no speech
- Problems with bladder/bowel control

**BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL CHANGES**
- Irritability/impatience
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty reading social cues
- Mood swings
- Inability to cope
- Self-centeredness

**COGNITIVE/SENSORY PROBLEMS**
- Slowed thinking
- Trouble starting/completing tasks
- Difficulty with learning and memory
- Impaired judgment
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in smell/taste/hearing/vision
- Difficultly sequencing
- Loss of personal safety skills

**HELPFUL TIPS**

People with brain injuries often have memory difficulties. They may have problems carrying out plans and need redirection or become easily frustrated. Tips for working with individuals with brain injuries include:
- Talk slowly and clearly
- Speak in short sentences
- Give time to respond; take time to listen
- Repeat information
- Have patience; stay calm
- Avoid over stimulation
- Put things in writing
- Read and fill out forms if the person is having trouble
- Ask questions about specific symptoms
- Let them know what to do next
- Follow-up to ensure they take the appropriate next steps