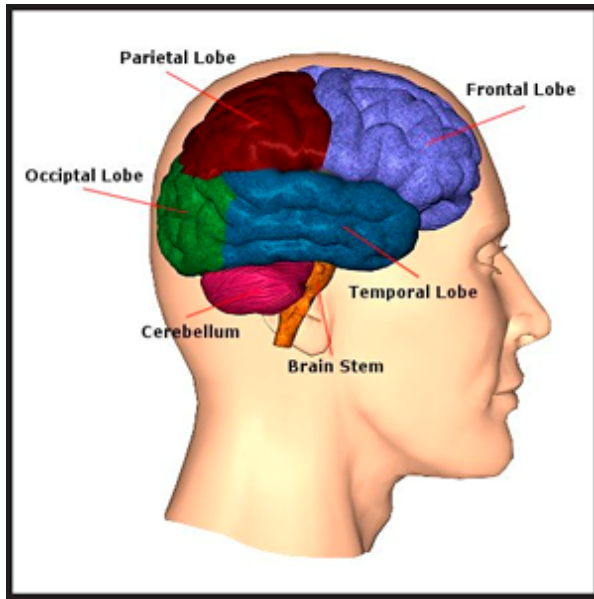


Facts about Traumatic Brain Injury



What is a traumatic brain injury?

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is defined as a 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.

How many people have TBI?

Of the 1.4 million who sustain a TBI each year in the United States:

- 50,000 die;
- 235,000 are hospitalized; and
- 1.1 million are treated and released from an emergency department.

The number of people with TBI who are not seen in an emergency department or who receive no care is unknown.

What causes TBI?

The leading causes of TBI are:

- Falls (28%);
- Motor vehicle-traffic crashes (20%);
- Struck by/against (19%); and
- Assaults (11%).

Blasts are a leading cause of TBI for active duty military personnel in war zones.

Who is at highest risk for TBI?

- Males are about 1.5 times as likely as females to sustain a TBI.
- The two age groups at highest risk for TBI are 0 to 4 year olds and 15 to 19 year olds.
- Certain military duties (e.g., paratrooper) increase the risk of sustaining a TBI
- African Americans have the highest death rate from TBI.

What are the costs of TBI?

Direct medical costs and indirect costs such as lost productivity of TBI totaled an estimated \$56.3 billion in the United States in 1995.

What are the long-term consequences of TBI?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that at least 5.3 million Americans currently have a long-term or lifelong need for help to perform activities of daily living as a result of a TBI.

According to one study, about 40% of those hospitalized with a TBI had at least one unmet need for services one year after their injury. The most frequent unmet needs were:

- Improving memory and problem solving;
- Managing stress and emotional upsets;
- Controlling one's temper; and
- Improving one's job skills.

TBI can cause a wide range of functional changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, and/or emotions. It can also cause epilepsy and increase the risk for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other brain disorders that become more prevalent with age.