

BRAIN INJURY

AWARENESS MONTH

• MARCH •

Did you know that millions of Americans experience brain injuries each year—often with lasting effects on their health and daily lives? Brain injuries can affect anyone, regardless of age or background. Understanding the risks, recognizing the signs, and knowing how to prevent and respond to brain injuries are essential steps for everyone.

Concussions are the most frequent type of brain injury, often resulting from falls, sports, and accidents. During a concussion, the brain bumps against the inside of the skull, which may cause long-term changes in brain function. Awareness and prevention are key to reducing the impact of concussions.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are approximately 3 million sports-related concussions per year in the United States.

Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion

- Appearing dazed or stunned
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Inability to recall events prior to the hit or fall

Not everyone experiences symptoms immediately; issues may develop days or even weeks after a concussion. Any unusual changes following a head injury should be evaluated by a medical professional.

Brain Injury Prevention Tips:

- Always wear a seat belt when driving or riding in a car
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Choose safe sports programs that follow safety rules and avoid risky drills
- Wear a helmet when biking, playing contact sports, skating, horseback riding, skiing, or snowboarding
- Prevent falls:
 - » Practice strength and balance exercises such as heel-to-toe walk, one-leg stand, or step-ups.
 - » Make your home safer by removing hazards
- Keep children safe:
 - » Install window guards and use safety gates near stairs
 - » Ensure playgrounds have soft surfaces such as mulch or sand

First Aid for Minor Head Injuries

- Apply a cold compress (not directly on skin) to reduce swelling
- After cleaning, cover small cuts with gauze or a bandage
- Monitor for 24 hours: Wake the person every two hours and check alertness
- Seek immediate medical care if the person cannot be awakened or does not respond normally

Protecting your brain is essential for overall health and well-being. By staying informed, practicing prevention, and recognizing signs, you can help reduce the risk and impact of brain injuries. If you or someone you know experiences a head injury, seek medical attention promptly.

Sources:

- [More than a bump on the old noggin](#)
- [Head Neck Spine Injuries](#)
- [Kids and concussions](#)

Please note: This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult your healthcare provider for medical concerns. Please refer to your plan documents for specific benefit details and limitations.

