



Brain Injury Association of Canada (BIAC) Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Information

Eye-Opening Facts and Figures:

- ✓ The incidence of acquired brain injury is far greater than multiple sclerosis, HIV/AIDS, spinal cord injuries and breast cancer combined.
- ✓ The impact of an acquired brain injury is widely felt - by the survivor, family, caregivers, their communities, and in fact the country as a whole.
- ✓ Survival rates have increased with advanced trauma services and improved treatment options. That's a good thing.
- ✓ Research, preventative and support programs for those with acquired brain injury have not kept pace with those rates, however. And that's *not* a good thing.
- ✓ The majority of cyclists who die each year die of brain injuries.¹
- ✓ Wearing a helmet while riding a bicycle can reduce the risk of brain injury by 88%.¹
- ✓ Brain injury affects a significant number of people each year and the numbers are reaching epidemic proportions.¹
- ✓ Approximately 1.5 million people in Canada are living with a brain injury.
- ✓ Statistics indicate that 100,000 Canadians will experience a brain injury each year.
- ✓ In Canada, the annual cost of ABI has been estimated at \$3 billion, with \$1 billion in Ontario alone.²

¹ Ref: Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association - Description on website. Received authorization to use and adapt their text.

² Ref: Brain Injury Association Sudbury & District - ABI Basics; <http://www.biasd.ca/education/abi-basics>

Potential Effects of ABI:

- ✓ ABI can cause a wide range of functional changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, and emotions.
 - ➔ Thinking (i.e., memory and reasoning);
 - ➔ Sensation (i.e., touch, taste, light, sound and smell);
 - ➔ Language (i.e., communication, expression, and understanding); and
 - ➔ Emotion (i.e., depression, anxiety, personality changes, aggression, acting out, and social inappropriateness).³

For Information and Clarification:

The official definitions of *acquired brain injury* and *traumatic brain injury*, as adopted by the Brain Injury Association are below:

An **acquired brain injury** is an injury to the brain, which is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. An acquired brain injury is an injury to the brain that has occurred after birth.

Acquired brain injury (ABI) includes traumatic or non-traumatic events:

- ✓ A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is an injury to the brain caused by an external force, such as:
 - ➔ a sports injury
 - ➔ a motor vehicle crash
 - ➔ a fall
 - ➔ an assault
 - ➔ a gunshot wound

- ✓ Non-traumatic brain injury is an internal injury to the brain itself, which can be the result of:
 - ➔ a stroke
 - ➔ loss of oxygen to the brain (hypoxic brain injury)
 - ➔ meningitis.

Following a brain injury, the injured person may experience any number of these effects in varying degrees. Individuals working with and caring for a person with a brain injury will need to be particularly sensitive, observant, aware and flexible.

For more information about the **Brain Injury Association of Canada**, its mission, and work towards prevention, education and early detection, visit our website at: <http://biac-aclc.ca/>

³ National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Traumatic brain injury: hope through research. Bethesda (MD): National Institutes of Health; 2002 Feb. NIH Publication No.: 02-158.