

**HOLIDAY
2020**



IMPACT



A website built for the brain injury community, caregivers, and health care professionals
www.braininjurycanada.ca

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS



The holidays are coming up, and we wanted to remind you of Brain Injury Canada's holiday hours. We will be closed from December 24, 2020 - January 3, 2021. We will be reopening on January 4, 2021.

We understand that this holiday may look a little different for many of you due to COVID-19. While a lot of us can't be with family in person, don't forget that there are plenty of ways to [stay in touch over the holidays virtually](#). There are also virtual resources available to you through our resource website and [your local brain injury association](#).

If you're looking for safe holiday celebration ideas, [check out our new guide](#). We hope you have a safe, festive holiday season and a bright, hopeful New Year!

Health care providers: The SOAR Project needs your input

Some of our partners at the University of British Columbia Okanagan are exploring the connections between intimate partner violence (IPV) and brain injury, and we're hoping you'll get involved! By taking part in a brief survey, you can help researchers identify the knowledge health care and community service providers who have expertise in brain injury, or work with people who've experienced brain injury, have about intimate partner violence and abuse, as well as any barriers that might exist when it comes to talking about IPV in your work.

The survey only takes about 10 minutes, and qualifies you to win a \$100 gift card just for doing it! To take the survey, just click here: https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bNrCDxmArc2LcrP

Thank you for your support!

Certains de nos partenaires de la British Columbia Okanagan University étudient les liens entre la violence par un partenaire intime (VPI) et les blessures au cerveau, et nous vous invitons cordialement à y participer! En prenant part à un bref sondage, vous pouvez aider notre équipe de recherche à inventorier les connaissances des prestataires de soins et de services communautaires spécialisés dans les blessures au cerveau, ou qui travaillent avec des personnes ayant subi de telles blessures, en matière de violence par un partenaire intime, ainsi que les divers obstacles qui vous empêchent d'aborder la VPI dans votre travail.

Le sondage ne vous prendra qu'une dizaine de minutes et vous courrez la chance de gagner un certificat-cadeau de 100\$ pour y avoir répondu! Pour répondre au sondage, cliquer ici:

https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0B9UQ6zx9KnLT8x

Un grand merci pour votre soutien!

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Since 2015, our Helmets for Life initiative has purchased hundreds of helmets for children in our communities & helped raise awareness about concussions and their long term implications.



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THE NEW RESOURCE WEBSITE



We are pleased to share that our NEW resource website has officially launched on www.braininjurycanada.ca

This website was designed specifically for the Canadian brain injury community, caregivers, and health care professionals. It features accessible design, comprehensive and clear content on a variety of topics related to brain injury, and multiple resources meant to help our readers.

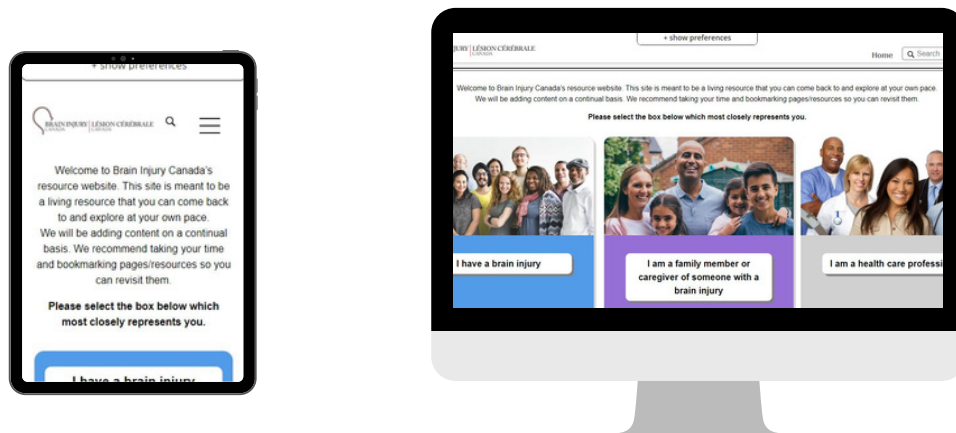
Information covered on the site include the effects of brain injury, different aspects of living with brain injury, information for caregivers, personal accounts, and free resources such as journal templates and informational booklets/toolkits. We also have a section for health care professionals.

This website will be updated on a regular basis with new information and resources as they become available. This is a site designed for you to come back to multiple times, and to bookmark as a resource in your recovery.

We could not have built this website without the generous support of our sponsors, partner organizations, and our Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). It took a whole team of people to bring this vision for an accessible website to life, and we're proud to be a part of increasing access to reliable information for Canadians.

Keep checking our website for new information, education, and updates on our organization.

www.braininjurycanada.ca



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Brain Injury Canada would like to extend our sincere appreciate for the continued support of the McColl-Early Foundation and Dr. Dan Andreae, Patron of Brain Injury Canada

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE BRAIN INJURY COMMUNITY



We know the last year has been challenging for everyone as the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of life. It is important to gather information from those living with brain injury, families/caregivers, health care providers and brain injury associations to ensure we understand the true impact of the pandemic in the context of brain injury.

Your feedback is essential, so if you are able to, please take a few minutes to complete our survey. This information will be used by Brain Injury Canada to:

- Evaluate the social and mental health impact of the pandemic on individuals, families and health care and service providers
- Highlight the need to provide and enhance existing services, with the essential input of those who live with brain injury, support others with brain injury, and work in brain injury in our advocacy initiatives
- Guide us in creating useful resources to help now and in the future

Please complete the survey which most represents you:

I am a person living with a brain injury: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9XMTY6Z>

I am a family member and/or caregiver: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9NL6BS2>

I am a health care/service provider working in brain injury: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9NJV835>

I am a staff member at a brain injury association: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X33N2TN>

To access our current mental health
information and resources, visit

www.braininjurycanada.ca

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MEET KIESZA



From our series *Stories of ABI*



In 2017, Canadian-born singer and performing artist Kiesza was in a car accident in Toronto that left her with a traumatic brain injury. For two years she has worked on her recovery and is now releasing new music through her own record label, Zebra Spirit Tribe. But the recovery journey is far from over. Kiesza spoke with Brain Injury Canada about her injury, her struggles, and how she moves forward each day.

After the accident

Kiesza acquired a brain injury the day she was in the car accident— but she didn't know it.

"I knew nothing about brain injury. I knew a little about concussions, but what I knew wasn't accurate," she says. "After the accident, I couldn't tell what was going on, and no one around me knew anything. I got out of the car, and I was stunned. There was a ringing in my ears, and my balance was off. People asked me if I needed to go to the hospital. I said I didn't know."

"I walked home that night, and I don't know how but I got on my flight to New York the next day. It was when we started to land the pressure changed that I started to feel like something was wrong," says Kiesza. "It was about 5 days of worsening symptoms before I went to the emergency room in New York. They told me I had a concussion and to take one day off work."

"It's crazy, because you feel things days and months after the injury. It escalates, and your brain is running into turbulence," Kiesza explains. "I flew to Denmark and did a show. I almost cancelled but it was an important show. I completely collapsed after. I knew something was definitely wrong."

"After that, I cancelled everything: it was the end of my career at the time."

The early stages of recovery

For the next 6 months, Kiesza spent much of her time alone, limiting her activities due to nausea, balance issues, and many other symptoms that made activities of daily living difficult.

Continue on next page

From our series *Stories of ABI*

She ended up moving to Los Angeles to be close to her cousin, who has a background in neurology and was able to offer support.

“Everyday my life was recovery. I was experimenting with therapies. It was painful; I was nauseous and dizzy all the time,” Kiesza says.

Kiesza didn’t just have physical symptoms. “I had trouble controlling my emotions. I had to work through a lot of fear. I was scared of lots of things. I was scared of washing the dishes!” Today, Kiesza still struggles with nausea, balance, and even reading. “I can only do one to two chapters a day, and I really have to track the page,” Kiesza says. “I’m still trying. I get tired – my brain crashes, which is terrible. You have to work a lot to repair your brain. But I never lost my will.”

She always had the will, but sometimes it was difficult to find the way.

“Every brain injury is different, and you don’t know how things are going to go. And no one does. Everything was a mystery going forward,” explains Kiesza. Many of her doctors and therapists were open about the fact that they couldn’t predict what would happen next with her recovery.

While Kiesza did have some assistance from family and friends, for the most part she was on her own. “It was a longer journey on my own,” she says, adding that it makes a difference having people behind you. But it’s also difficult explaining to people what’s happening to you.

“People ask me why I didn’t do something or tell people what was going on [at the time]. My response was that my brain was injured. I didn’t have the capacity to think about it, to realize what was going on,” she says. “I couldn’t think my way through it.”

“What was really helpful was I had a neuroscientist explain what was happening to my brain – I got it on a scientific level and it helped me figure out what was real and what wasn’t,” Kiesza said. For her, understanding that she was feeling a certain way or reacting to a certain thing because of her brain injury helped her focus on her recovery.

You can finish Kiesza's story at www.braininjurycanada.ca/en/kiesza

Interested in Sharing Your Story?

Brain injury affects over 1.5 million Canadians. Our 'Stories of ABI' bring comfort and connection to all our readers across the country.

If you'd like to share your story, please email
info@braininjurycanada.ca.

We will send you our submission rules and help make the process as accessible as possible.



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Alberta

- Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society
- Brain Care Centre

British Columbia

- British Columbia Brain Injury Association
- Braintrust Canada
- Bulkley Valley Brain Injury Association
- Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association
- Comox Valley Head Injury Association
- Kamloops Brain Injury Association
- Nanaimo Brain Injury Association
- North Okanagan Shuswap Brain Injury Association
- Northern Brain Injury Association of BC
- Powell River Brain Injury Association
- Prince George Brain Injured Group Society
- South Okanagan Similkameen Brain Injury Society
- West Kootenay Brain Injury Association
- Vancouver Brain Injury Association
- Victoria Brain Injury Association

Manitoba

- Manitoba Brain Injury Association

Newfoundland & Labrador

- Newfoundland & Labrador Brain Injury Association
- Neuropsychiatric Patients' Association

Nova Scotia

- Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia

Ontario

- Ontario Brain Injury Association
- Brain Injury Association of Quinte District
- Brain Injury Association of Fort Erie
- New Beginnings - Chatham-Kent
- Brain Injury Association of Durham Region
- Hamilton Brain Injury Association
- Brain Injury Association of London and Region
- Brain Injury Association of Niagara
- Brain Injury Association of North Bay and Area
- Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario
- Brain Injury Association of the Ottawa Valley
- Brain Injury Association of Peel Halton
- Brain Injury Association of Peterborough Region
- Brain Injury Association of Sarnia Lambton
- Brain Injury Association of Sault Ste Marie
- Seizure & Brain Injury Centre
- Brain Injury Association of Sudbury
- Brain Injury Association of Toronto
- Brain Injury Association of Waterloo/Wellington
- Brain Injury Association of Windsor Essex
- Brain Injury Association of York Region

Prince Edward Island

- Brain Injury Association of Prince Edward Island

FIND YOUR BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION



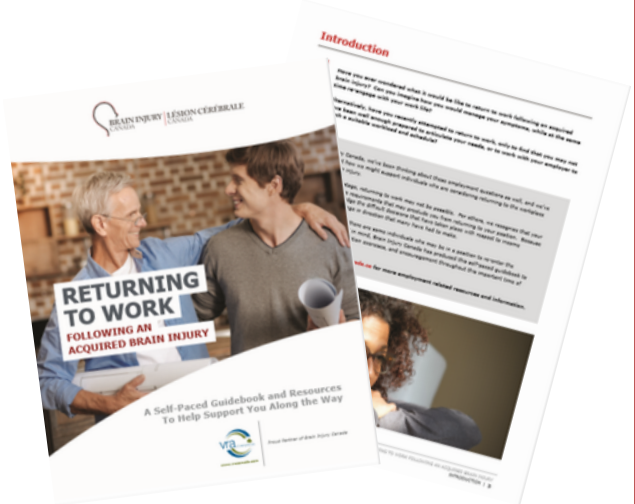
Quebec

- CONNEXION - Regroupement des Associations des Personnes TCC du Québec
- Association des personnes ACVA-TCC du Bas-Saint-Laurent
- Association des traumatisés crâniens de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Association des handicapés adultes Côte-Nord
- Association des accidentés cérébro-vasculaires et traumatisés crâniens de l'Estrie
- Association des TCC et ACV de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Association des personnes handicapées physiques et sensorielles du secteur Joliette
- Centre d'aide personnes traumatisées crâniennes et handicapées physiques Laurentides
- Association des traumatisés cranio-cérébraux Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec
- Association des Traumatisés cranio-cérébraux de la Montérégie
- Association québécoise des traumatisés crâniens
- Association des neurotraumatisés – Outaouais
- Association des TCC des deux rives
- Association Renaissance des personnes traumatisées crâniennes du Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association
- Lloydminster and Area Brain Injury Society

Download our **Return to Work** guidebook



[Download the English version](#)

[Version française](#)



Research Participants Needed

A gender transformative approach to improve outcomes and equity among persons with traumatic brain injury



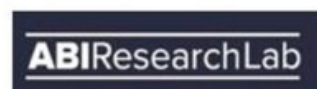
What the study is about: This research study aims to find out whether or not education enhances knowledge and changes the attitudes of patients, their significant others and clinicians towards the relevance of sex and gender in traumatic brain injury.

The study involves participation in a one-time educational session and completion of a questionnaire before and after the educational session that will test your knowledge and attitudes before and after the educational session. The total time it will take to participate in this study is around 2 hours. You will be reimbursed for your time.

Who can participate: Adults with traumatic brain injury, their significant others, and clinicians attending to patients with traumatic brain injury.

Taking part in research is voluntary.
Call 416-597-3422 ext. 7829 or by email at
TBIGenderstudy@uhn.ca, to learn more

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