

Brain injury can happen to anyone



Acquired Brain Injury: The Basics



www.braininjurycanada.ca

What is an Acquired Brain Injury?

Acquired Brain Injury refers to any damage to the brain that occurs after birth and is not related to a congenital or a degenerative disease.

There are 2 types of Acquired Brain Injury:

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Non-Traumatic Brain Injury

Non-traumatic brain injuries are caused by something that happens inside the body or a substance is introduced into the body that damages brain tissues. They can include:

- > Ischemic stroke
- > Hemorrhagic stroke
- > Aneurysm
- > Seizure disorders
- > Brain tumour
- > Poisoning
- > Substance abuse
- > Opioid overdose
- > Meningitis
- > Encephalitis
- > Hydrocephalus
- > Vasculitis
- > Hematoma

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Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic brain injuries are caused by something that comes from outside the body, such as a blow, bump, or jolt. It can result in temporary injury, or more serious, long-term damage to the brain. They can include:

- > Motor vehicle accidents
- > Falls
- > Assaults
- > Gunshot wounds
- > Domestic violence
- > Strangulation, suffocation
- > Shaken baby syndrome
- > Sport injuries
- > Explosive blasts, combat injuries



A brain injury can happen to Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime.

Impact of Acquired Brain Injury

The effects of an acquired brain injury can begin to show immediately or increase / decrease over time. Every individual will experience a unique combination of challenges and changes.



Physical

- › Fatigue, difficulties with sleeping, insomnia
- › Challenges with walking, sitting, moving from one location to another, bathing and household tasks
- › Slurred speech
- › Chronic pain, headaches
- › Seizures, vertigo (*sensation of dizziness / spinning / loss of balance*)



Cognitive

- › Needing more time to process information
- › Difficulty with making plans, decisions, organizing or beginning tasks
- › Challenges with communicating: understanding and making conversations, finding the right word, speaking in proper sentences, understanding cues
- › Difficulty writing
- › Difficulty with concentration, easily distracted
- › Difficulty with memory, learning, reasoning and judgment
- › Perseveration: getting stuck on a single topic, idea, or activity either in conversation or actions
- › Loss / changes to senses and perceptions: sensations, sense of smell or taste, vision, double vision, hearing, swallowing



Emotional

- › Feeling irritable, having a 'short fuse'
- › Depression, anxiety, anger
- › Prone to sudden, extreme emotions for no clear reason
- › Showing a limited emotional response to situations
- › Feelings of loss of identity



Behavioural

- › Engaging in risky behavior, impulsive
- › Lack of a 'filter', saying things that are inappropriate
- › Isolating oneself
- › Difficulty with social and work relationships
- › Changing / inconsistent sleep patterns
- › Change in role: often from being independent to relying on others for care and support

Our Mission

The mission of Brain Injury Canada is to enhance the quality of life of individuals and families / caregivers living with brain injury in Canada. Our Board, staff and volunteers are dedicated to facilitating post-trauma research, education, awareness and advocacy in partnership with national, provincial / territorial and regional associations and other stakeholders.

Brain injury is unpredictable, unique and affects every aspect of life. All individuals and families / caregivers living with the effects of brain injury should feel supported, valued and engaged in their communities.



Please visit our website for more information and to find your local or provincial brain injury association.