# Intersections of brain injury

## Mental health

Exploring the intersection of mental health and brain injury (BI) sheds light on how these conditions intertwine, emphasizing the importance of addressing both the mind and the body in the journey toward recovery. It's important to understand that mental health issues and BIs can happen on their own or be closely connected, with BIs sometimes making any existing mental health problems worse.

DID YOU KNOW?

* BI can alter dopamine transmission in the brain, and about half of all people with TBI are affected by depression within the first year after injury. Nearly two-thirds are affected within seven years after injury.
* Mental health disorders that may present themselves after brain injury include major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, mania, psychosis, and more.
* After a BI, an individual has a greater chance of developing a chronic mental health condition. Traumatic brain injury (TBI) patients reported a higher incidence of chronic mental health conditions compared to those without TBI (27% vs. 12%), and a greater proportion of TBI patients utilized mental health services compared to non-injured individuals (24% vs. 13%)​.
* Up to 77% of individuals with TBI receive a psychiatric diagnosis within the first year post-injury, indicating a critical period for mental health monitoring and intervention to address anxiety, mood, and substance-use disorders that are commonly diagnosed. Early psychiatric evaluation after BI is crucial.

Early signs to watch for

* Changes in mood
* Withdrawal
* Anxiety
* Cognitive changes
* Sleep disturbances
* Behavioral changes
* Difficulty coping with emotions
* Changes in eating patterns
* Physical symptoms like headaches, dizziness, or fatigue

The intersection of BI and mental health is complex. This connection happens because the brain is responsible for our thinking, feelings, and behavior, and both BIs and mental health issues are the result of some dysfunction of the brain. If someone has a BI, it is important that they seek out professional mental health support. If they are experiencing a mental health crisis, phone 9-1-1 or a local 24/7 mental health crisis line immediately.

For more info, visit braininjurycanada.ca