

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ#1

General Information

What Is Traumatic Brain Injury?

TBI is defined as a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain. TBI can cause a wide range of functional changes—short or long-term—affecting thinking, language, learning, emotions, behavior and/or sensation. Memory loss, difficulty with judgment and recognition of limitations, anxiety and/or depression, loss of social networking, feelings of isolation, slowness or difficulty with speech, decreased physical coordination, decreased anger management, decreased safety awareness, and difficulty initiating, planning and completing tasks can be some of the consequences of TBI.

Causes of TBI

In 2005, falls became the leading cause of traumatic brain injury in adults, with car crashes a close second. Pedestrian related incidents and violence (such as shootings and assaults) are also major causes of TBI in adults.

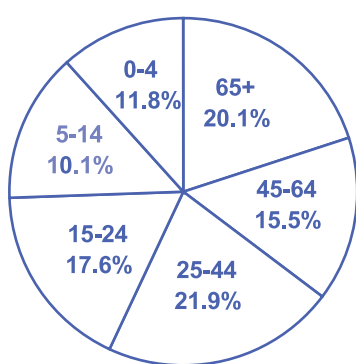
Mild TBI

A “mild” brain injury, sometimes called a concussion, is one where the individual may lose consciousness or experience an altered state of consciousness lasting from a few seconds up to 30 minutes, and may include posttraumatic amnesia.

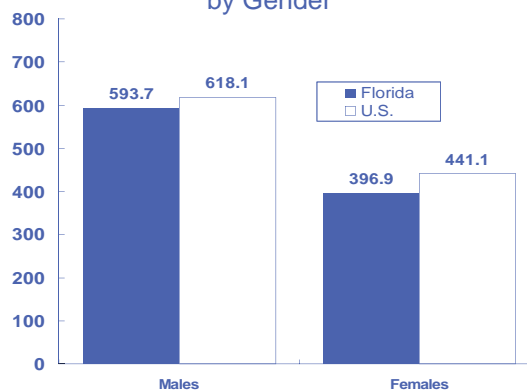
Who Has TBI?

Today about 369,600 people are living with TBI-related disabilities in Florida. By 2015, the number is expected to reach 435,350. In 2005, about 93,000 TBIs were sustained in Florida (511.5 per 100,000), which resulted in 3,900 deaths, 17,700 hospitalizations and 71,400 emergency department visits.

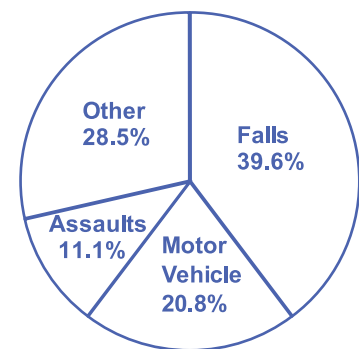
Total TBIs in Florida by Age Group, 2005*



TBI Rates for Florida and the US by Gender**



Total TBIs in Florida by Cause, 2005*



*Source: State of Florida, Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Statistics, 2005; State of Florida, AHCA, Detailed Discharge Data, 2005; State of Florida, AHCA, Emergency Department Data, 2005; State of Florida, Department of Health, CHARTS, accessed Feb 2007. **Source: State of Florida, Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Statistics, 2005; State of Florida, AHCA, Detailed Discharge Data, 2005; State of Florida, AHCA, Emergency Department Data, 2005; Traumatic Brain Injury in the United States: ED Visits, Hospitalizations and Deaths, 2006; State of Florida, Department of Health, CHARTS, accessed Feb 2007.



Helpline: 1-800-992-3442 • www.biaf.org

Cognitive Consequences Can Include:

- Short-term memory loss; long-term memory loss
- Slowed ability to process information
- Trouble concentrating or paying attention for periods of time
- Difficulty keeping up with a conversation; other communication difficulties such as word finding problems
- Spatial disorientation
- Organizational problems and impaired judgment
- Unable to do more than one thing at a time
- A lack of initiating activities, or once started, difficulty in completing tasks without reminders

Physical Consequences Can Include:

- Seizures of all types
- Muscle spasticity
- Double vision or low vision, even blindness
- Loss of smell or taste
- Speech impairments such as slow or slurred speech
- Headaches or migraines
- Fatigue, increased need for sleep
- Balance problems

Emotional Consequences Can Include:

- Increased anxiety
- Depression and mood swings
- Impulsive behavior
- More easily agitated
- Egocentric behaviors; difficulty seeing how behaviors can affect others

Sources:

1. Centers for Disease Control. "Traumatic Brain Injury in the United States: A Report to Congress." www: Centers for Disease Control, (January 16, 2001)
http: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/tbicongress.htm.
2. Analysis by the CDC National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, using data obtained from state health departments in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Utah.
3. Annegers JF, Garbow JD, Kurtland LT et al. The Incidence, Causes and Secular Trends of Head Trauma in Olstead County, Minnesota 1935- 1974. *Neurology*. 1980; 30:912-919.
4. Lewin –ICF. *The Cost of Disorders of the Brain* Washington, DC: The National Foundation for the Brain, 1992.
5. Personal Communications with Dr. David Thurman, CDC - National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, June 29, 1999.



Helpline: 1-800-992-3442 • www.biaf.org