

Q&A with the Institute

WHAT IS A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)?

Any alteration in brain functioning, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by external force. Severity can range from mild, moderate to severe with effects consisting of concussions to paralysis, coma and/or death.

WHAT CAUSES A BRAIN INJURY?

Falls, motor vehicle accidents, sport- and recreation-related injuries, battlefield wounds, child abuse and shaken baby syndrome, gunshot wounds, amongst others. Acquired brain injuries (ABI) can be caused by stroke, brain tumors, substance abuse, food poisoning, infection, lack of oxygen to the brain & etc.

HOW OFTEN DO TBI'S OCCUR?

A new TBI occurs every 21 seconds. Brain injury-related deaths occur every 10 minutes.

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER INJURIES?

A TBI may cause different symptoms depending where the injury occurred on the brain. It has been termed the “invisible wound” because a person may appear “fine,” but cannot perform everyday tasks. Since brain injury is the leading cause of death for individuals under 25 in the United States, it is typically the last thing on anyone’s mind until it’s the only thing on a person’s mind.

Financially, there are many differences to treating a brain injury than, say a broken leg or a sprained wrist. According to a recent USA Today article, brain injury rehabilitation is an expensive treatment that most insurers underinsure or do not cover at all. This lack of coverage means that thousands of patients are discharged each year from hospitals to nursing homes or home environments without receiving the rehabilitative care necessary to transition into more productive circumstances.

Q&A with the Institute

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES ARE PROVIDED FOR BRAIN INJURY PATIENTS AT THE INSTITUTE?

Since a brain injury may affect any and/or all areas of the body, each individual will have unique needs. Our Adult, Pediatric and Adolescent Day Treatment and Outpatient Medical Rehabilitation Programs provides comprehensive, intensive therapies, including physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and/or neuropsychology services. These services help patients strengthen muscles, relearn skills and find new ways of doing daily tasks. Our specialty include adaptive technology training, driving assessment and evaluation services to enable participants to re-enter work, school and community environments.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RECOVER?

Recovery time is person and injury-specific. On average, it takes a minimum of six months to see measurable success in rehabilitation.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT A TBI?

Avoid tasks that may cause a blow to the head. Be aware of your surroundings. When riding a bicycle or motorcycle, wear protective gear. Use caution when beginning home repair projects or diving into unknown waters. And always remember, you are not invincible.



For more information, please call 816-751-7700 or visit us online at www.rehabkc.org.