

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Hypoxic Brain Injury in Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)/Domestic Violence (DV)

Traumatic brain injury is a bump, blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the way the brain normally works. It can cause cognitive, physical, emotional and behavioral challenges.

Awareness of causes and risk factors related to TBI and IPV/DV is important.

- TBI can be an unrecognized result of intimate partner violence/domestic violence.
- IPV/DV is a common cause of brain injury, especially in women.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), assaults account for 10 percent of traumatic brain injuries annually (CDC, 2002-2006).
- The head and face are among the most common targets of intimate partner assaults, with those assaulted often suffering head, neck and facial injuries.
- TBI can be caused by a blow to the head (being hit on the head, the head hitting an object) or shaking of the brain (forceful whip-lash motion)
- Sometimes IPV/DV can lead to a hypoxic injury, or brain injury due to loss of oxygen to the brain. Airway obstruction for too long of a time caused by choking, strangulation, near drowning, or drug reaction/overdose causes hypoxic brain injury.
- Repeated brain injury is typical of ongoing intimate partner violence/domestic violence and leads to cognitive, physical and emotional challenges over time.
- Loss of consciousness or severe trauma does not have to occur for a brain injury to exist.

Some of the most common symptoms of TBI include but are not limited to:

- Difficulty with balance or muscle control
- Slurred speech, impaired vision and/or hearing
- Difficulty with attention, memory, understanding, and/or judgment
- Reduced problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Delayed thought processing and/or response time
- Impulsive behaviors
- Anxiousness, irritability or agitation
- Depression
- Seizures, fatigue or other medical conditions



In an effort to increase awareness, a person with a brain injury can carry a survivor wallet card to help avoid misunderstandings with law enforcement, first responders and others. The wallet card includes contact information, an emergency contact and possible symptoms of brain injury. The brain injury survivor wallet card can be found by clicking the link below or by visiting www.bianc.net

[Click here for a printable version of the Brain Injury Survivor Wallet Card.](#)

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TBI Screening Tools

The websites below provide screening tools that are not for diagnostic purposes.

The Ohio State University TBI Identification Method (OSU TBI-ID)
www.ohiovalley.org/informationeducation

HELPS Brain Injury Screening Tool
North Carolina TBI Training Module 3: HELPS
www.nctbitraining.org

For resources and referral for TBI services, contact:

Brain Injury Association of North Carolina (BIANC)
www.bianc.net

Brain Injury Resource Centers

Raleigh 800-377-1464
Charlotte 704-355-1502
Winston Salem 336-713-8582
Asheville 828-277-4868
Greenville 252-717-3347

Training on TBI in North Carolina
www.nctbitraining.org

BrainLine.org
www.brainline.org

Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence Resources:

National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-7233
800-787-3224
www.ndvh.org

North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence
888-232-9124
www.nccadv.org

*You can find this TBI and IPV/DV information sheet along with additional TBI information at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services website.
<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/disability-services/traumatic-brain-injury>*



State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services
www.ncdhhs.gov • www.ncdhhs.gov/dss

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