

BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS #CHANGEYOURMIND

Adapted from Brain Injury Association of America



Each March, the Brain Injury Association of America leads the nation in observing Brain Injury Awareness Month by conducting an awareness campaign aimed at education the general public about the incidence of brain injury and the needs of people with brain

injuries and their families. The theme for the 2018 to 2020 campaign is Change Your Mind.

Brain Injury is unpredictable in its consequences. Brain Injury affects who we are and the way we think, act, and feel. It can change everything about us in a matter of seconds. The most important things to remember are:

- A person with a brain injury is a person first.
- No two brain injuries are exactly the same.
- The effects of a brain injury are complex and vary greatly from person to person.
- The effects of a brain injury depends on such factors as cause, location, and severity.

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is defined as an alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force.

Traumatic impact injuries can be defined as closed (or non-penetrating) or open (penetrating).

Immediately following a brain injury, two things occur:

1. Brain tissue reacts to the trauma from the injury with a series of biochemical and other physiological responses. Substances that once were housed safely within these cells now flood the brain, further damaging and

destroying brain cells in what is called secondary cell death.

2. Depending on the severity of brain injury, effects may include temporary loss of consciousness or coma, respiratory (breathing) problems, and/or damaged motor functions.

Brain Injury Facts & Statistics

- Every 9 seconds, someone in the United States sustains a brain injury.
- The number of people who sustain TBIs and do not seek treatment is unknown
- One of every 60 people in the United States lives with a TBI-related disability. The annual impact of TBI in the U.S. is significant:
 - At least 2.5 million people sustain a TBI
 - 2.2 million are treated for TBI in Emergency Departments and Trauma Centers
 - 280,000 are hospitalized
 - 50,000 died

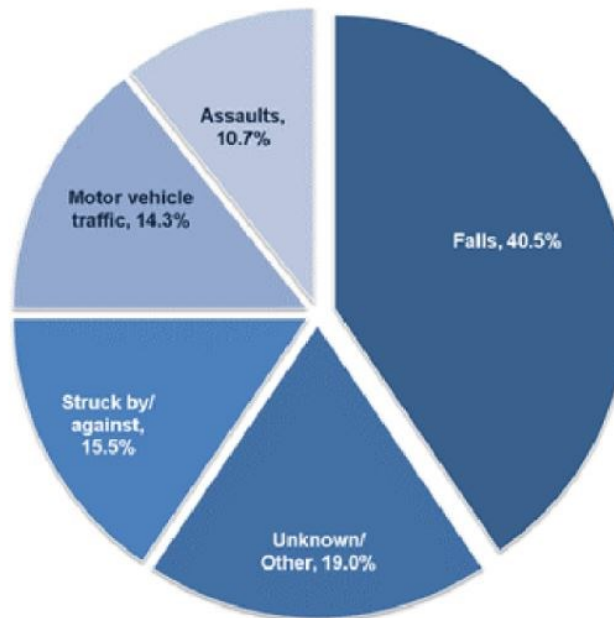
- Every day, 137 people die in the U.S. because of a TBI-related injury.

- At least 5.3 million Americans live with a TBI-related injury.

- When Someone sustains a brain injury, many people are affected:

- Survivors and their parents, spouses, siblings, extended families, and friends
- Healthcare providers
- Insurance companies
- Attorneys
- Educators
- Government agencies
- Employers of all types

Leading Causes of TBI



Faces of Trauma

NICHOLAS RUCHLEWICZ

On March 15, 2016 I was in a motorcycle accident due to a mechanical malfunction. Even with all the protective gear I sustained the following injuries: shattered orbital bones in my face, massive concussion due to brain bleed/swelling, separated pelvic circle, and fractured Sacroiliac Joint. I was taken that night to Inova Fairfax Trauma Center. During my hospitalization, I endured numerous surgeries and procedures to address my injuries. I don't have any memories from the moment of impact until I became lucid on March 28th, when I was transferred to Inova Mt. Vernon Rehabilitation Hospital.

While going through this traumatic event, I found myself navigating a multitude of unknowns and feeling waves of different emotions. I felt angry with my situation and at times wanted to shut down, but I'm so grateful that I persevered. Due to my injuries, I had to relearn basic tasks like lifting a fork and walking again. All of this was painful but thanks to my medical team, friends and family, I was encouraged to keep going. I've become a better me and created a "new normal."

Two years later, no one can believe I was injured, and I am grateful that my outside doesn't show my internal struggles from my trauma. I learned so much through this that helped me know myself more. While I was in the process of recovery, I sometimes found myself looking at my progress and feeling angry. But I learned to focus on all of my progress and how much I've accomplished which helped me stay the course. I learned that not everyday ended in a win but my victory was that I chose to heal.

Cognitive behavioral therapy has helped me with my stress, to focus on details, and to define myself professionally. I am very excited that this year I will be able to walk down the aisle with someone who never gave up on me and who made sure I never gave up on myself. I always say, the present is where joy lives. Life can be difficult – but I found that the two paths for me are acceptance and change. Everyday, I choose to change for the better.



Coming up this month...

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Peer Visiting (daytime)	2	3
4	5	6	7 Peer Visiting (evening)	8	9	10
11	12 Drawn Together	13	14	15 Peer Visiting (daytime)	16	17 
18	19	20 TBI Group	21 Peer Visiting (evening) Trauma Talk	22	23	24
25	26 Drawn Together	27	28	29	30	31

TBI Group

Tuesday March 20^h
12 - 1:30 pm
IHVI Conference Room
Ground Floor
(snacks are served, RSVP)

Trauma Talk

Wednesday March 21st
7 - 8:30 pm
IHVI Conference Room
Ground Floor
(snacks are served, RSVP)

Drawn Together

Mondays March 12th & 26th
2 - 3 pm
IHVI Conference Room
Second Floor
(snacks are served, RSVP)

Peer Visiting

Wednesdays
March 7th & 21st
6 - 7:30 pm

Thursday
March 1st & 15th
10:30 am - 12 pm

All groups are free and take place at Inova Fairfax Hospital unless otherwise noted.