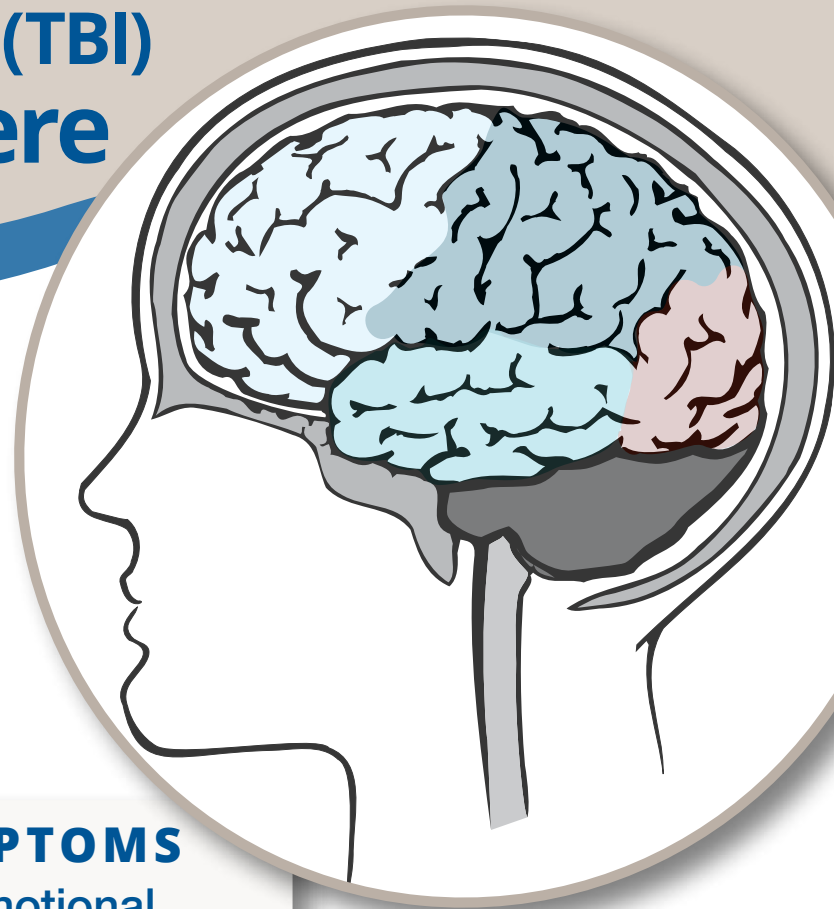


# Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Moderate or Severe



## DEFINITION

A TBI is classified as moderate or severe when a patient experiences any of the following:

- Is knocked out or blacks out for more than 30 minutes
- Has memory loss or is confused for hours, days or weeks
- Has an abnormal brain scan (CT or MRI)

## COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

### Physical

Headaches  
Changes in sleep  
Dizziness  
Balance problems  
Fatigue  
Sexual dysfunction  
Seizures  
Sensory changes  
Loss of strength

### Cognitive

Confusion/Agitation  
Attention problems  
Memory problems  
Difficulty with decision making  
Difficulty with speech  
Slowed thinking

### Emotional

Depression  
Anxiety  
Irritability  
Impulsivity  
Mood swings  
Inappropriate behavior  
Acting out of character

## DID YOU KNOW?

There are two types of TBIs:

### Closed Head Injury

Caused by a blow or jolt to the head that does not penetrate the skull

### Penetrating Head Injury

Occurs when an object goes through the skull and enters the brain

## RELATED INJURIES

- **Skull fracture:** a break in the bones that surround the brain
- **Cerebral edema:** swelling of the brain
- **Hematoma or hemorrhage:** bleeding in or around the brain
- **Contusion:** bruising of the brain
- **Hypoxia or anoxia:** lack of oxygen to the brain
- **Diffuse Axonal Injury:** twisting and/or tearing of the connections between brain cells

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## STAGES OF TREATMENT

**Inpatient care requires an overnight stay at a medical center.**

Acute/critical care is inpatient treatment that often begins in an intensive care unit.

This can last from a few days to several weeks depending on how serious the injury is.

**Outpatient care occurs after a patient is released from a medical center.**

Outpatient care may include appointments or therapy at a hospital, doctor's office or other rehabilitation center. No overnight stay is required.

## RECOVERY TIPS:

- Stay organized by following routines.
- Get seven to eight hours of sleep.
- Avoid overdoing mental and physical activities.
- Avoid smoking.
- Avoid drinking alcoholic or energy drinks.
- Do not isolate yourself — stay in touch with friends and family.
- Keep appointments and take an active role in your therapy sessions.

## AND REMEMBER...

- There is no "normal" time frame for recovery.
- Recovery depends on how serious the injury is and what areas of the brain are affected. Other injuries to the body also can affect recovery.
- The most rapid recovery will happen in the first six months following the injury, although recovery may continue for years.
- Most patients will learn useful ways to work around the new challenges from their injury.

For more information on the Family Caregiver Guide, for families of patients with moderate or severe TBI, contact [info@DVBIC.org](mailto:info@DVBIC.org) or visit [www.DVBIC.org](http://www.DVBIC.org).

