



# DEFENSE AND VETERANS BRAIN INJURY CENTER



The Defense and Veteran Brain Injury Center (DVBIC) was established by Congress in 1992 in response to the need to treat service members with traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). DVBIC's mission is to serve active-duty military, their beneficiaries and veterans with traumatic brain injuries through state-of-the-science clinical care, research and education.

## DVBIC serves

- Active Duty Military
- National Guard
- Reserve
- Veterans
- Family Members

## How We Serve

### Clinical Care

- Provides assistance at medical sites for TBI-related evaluation, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care

### Research

- Conducts and supports clinical research to improve treatment and outcomes for service members and veterans with TBI
- Identifies new research findings from federal and academic partners to ensure knowledge is translated into clinical practice

### Education

- Provides educational materials on awareness, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of TBI related issues
- Provides education and training tools for health care providers, military leadership, service members, veterans, families and civilian communities

### TBI Recovery Support Program

- Connects service members with a TBI and their family members to clinical and non-clinical resources in their communities
- Advocates on behalf of clients, provides TBI education, tracks symptoms and monitors treatment compliance and outcomes

## DVBIC Network

### DVBIC Headquarters

- Silver Spring, MD

### Military Medical Centers

- Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, MD
- San Antonio Military Medical Center, TX
- Naval Medical Center San Diego, CA
- Camp Lejeune, NC
- Camp Pendleton, CA
- Fort Belvoir, VA
- Fort Bragg, NC
- Fort Carson, CO
- Fort Hood, TX
- Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK
- Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany

### Veterans Affairs Medical Centers

- Richmond, VA
- Tampa, FL
- Minneapolis, MN
- Palo Alto, CA

To find your nearest DVBIC location, use the interactive map at [dvbic.dcoe.mil/locations](http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/locations)

For more information:  
[dvbic.dcoe.mil](http://dvbic.dcoe.mil)

# Traumatic Brain Injury

## What Is TBI?

- A blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the function of the brain
- Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI
- Severity of the TBI is determined at the time of injury and may be classified as:
  - mild
  - moderate
  - severe
  - penetrating

## Common Causes of TBI in the Military

- Motor vehicle crash
- Sports injury
- Blast exposures
- Bullets or fragments
- Falls
- Other (blunt objects)

## Common Symptoms of Mild TBI

### Physical

- Headache
- Sleep disturbances
- Dizziness
- Balance problems
- Nausea/vomiting
- Fatigue
- Visual disturbances
- Light sensitivity
- Ringing in ears

### Cognitive (Thinking)

- Slowed thinking
- Poor concentration
- Memory problems
- Difficulty finding words

### Emotional

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Irritability
- Mood swings
- Personality changes

## Mild TBI/Concussion

### Did you know?

- Concussion is another word for a mild TBI.
- Concussion is the most common form of TBI in the military population.
- Concussion results from a head injury that makes you feel dazed, confused or 'see stars' and may cause you to be briefly 'knocked-out' (or lose consciousness). However, most concussions do not cause unconsciousness.

### After concussion

- Symptoms typically improve within hours to days and resolve within weeks.
- The term *mild TBI* describes the injury, not necessarily the number or severity of symptoms.
- Even if you've had more than one concussion, **full recovery is expected.**
  - Each time you sustain an additional concussion, your recovery may take longer.

## Help Yourself Recover More Quickly

### Report the incident

- Protect yourself and/or your unit.

### Get checked out

- Be honest with your health care provider about any symptoms.

### Rest

- Avoid physical exertion (heavy lifting, exercising, etc.).
- Avoid mental exertion (writing reports, activities requiring intense concentration, video games, television, etc.).

### Return to duty

- Most people can expect to recover fully and return to duty.
- Your health care provider will determine when it's safe for you to return to duty.



## Caring for Caregivers

### *Do you care for a loved one who had a traumatic brain injury after October 2001 while serving in the military?*

You may be interested in the Caregiver Study! The purpose is to conduct research requested by Congress to determine caregiver health care needs.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Phone: 855-821-1469**

**Email: [caregiver.study@dvbic.org](mailto:caregiver.study@dvbic.org)**

## A Head for the Future

### *Multi-year initiative promotes key TBI prevention and awareness messages.*

You have the power to prevent TBI by making smart decisions in your day-to-day life:

- Recognize the symptoms of TBI.
- Talk to your spouses, line leaders and providers when you think you have been injured.
- TBIs are treatable and recovery is possible.
- The first step in recovering from a TBI is recognizing the symptoms.

**A HEAD FOR THE FUTURE**

For information, visit  
**[dvbic.dcoe.mil/aheadforthefuture](http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/aheadforthefuture)**

**Do you have questions about this fact sheet?  
Feedback? Email [info@dvbic.org](mailto:info@dvbic.org).**

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DVBIC is the TBI operational component of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.