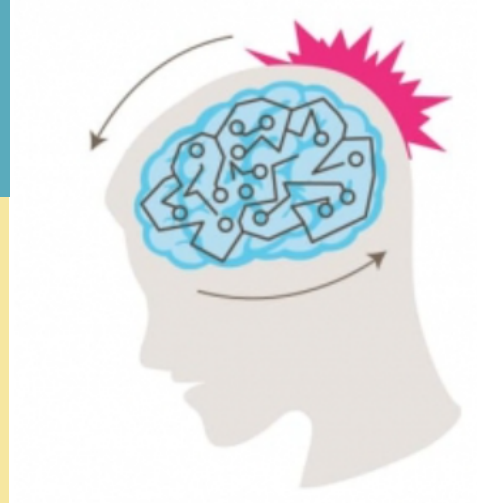




# CLOSED HEAD INJURIES AND CONCUSSIONS

Closed head injuries are the result of an impact to the head or body, commonly caused by sports injuries, a fall, a vehicle crash, or an assault. When the skull is hit or the head snaps back from an impact, the brain is shaken up. It can be bruised by hitting the walls of the skull.



## Signs and Symptoms:

- Headache
- Inability to remember what happened just before and just after the head injury
- Confusion
- Inability to carry out a simple set of instructions
- Vision disturbance
- Unsteadiness, loss of balance
- Nausea or vomiting

## Head injuries are common!

More than 1 million head injuries occur every year in the United States. Because head injuries (also known as **traumatic brain injuries**) are common and may have devastating effects, **preventing them is critical.**

**Did you know:** An individual does not have to have lost consciousness to have a concussion. In many cases, the symptoms of a mild concussion disappear within minutes. Some individuals who have a head injury may still have poor memory and concentration, headache, fatigue, and dizziness for several weeks to months. This is known as **post concussion syndrome.**

## Treatment for a closed head injury that has been diagnosed by a medical professional:

- Apply an ice bag to the head to reduce swelling.
- NO alcohol or sedatives during the next 48 hours.
- A person with a head injury should rest quietly for about 24 hours.
- It will be necessary to have a responsible person watch the patient with a closed head injury for the next 24-48 hours.
- Eat simple foods, such as soup or other liquids for the first 24 hours after the injury. Do not eat solid foods.
- Avoid strenuous physical activities for at least 24 hours after injury.
- Avoid taking aspirin or medications containing aspirin.

Check out the latest updates and more details from **the Cleveland Clinic:**



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(574)631-7497 - uhs.nd.edu



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## Types of traumatic brain injuries:

- **Concussion:** a temporary loss of brain function
- **Contusion:** bruising of the brain
- **Fracture:** broken skull bones
- **Hematoma:** blood clots or collection of blood under the skin



## Best ways to prevent a head injury:

- Always wear a **seat belt** in a motor vehicle, and drive safely.
- **Don't drive under the influence** of alcohol or drugs, including prescription medications that can impair the ability to drive.
- Wear a **helmet** while riding a bicycle, skateboard, motorcycle, snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle. Also wear appropriate head protection when playing baseball or contact sports, skiing, skating, snowboarding or riding a horse.
- **Pay attention to your surroundings.** Don't drive, walk or cross the street while using your phone, tablet or any smart device. These distractions can lead to accidents or falls.

## If you experience these symptoms, **Call 911** (or NDPD if on campus: (574) 631-5555)

- Unusually sleepy or difficult to arouse.
- Persistent nausea or vomiting that occurs more than three (3) times.
- Dizziness, confusion or change in usual behavior.
- Slurred speech or difficulty speaking.
- Increased irritability or sluggishness.
- Difficulty seeing, waking, or using arms.
- Bleeding or drainage from ears, mouth, or nose.
- New or worsening neck pain.
- Headache persists longer than 24 hours or becomes more intense beyond 12 hours after injury.
- Any other symptoms that seem unusual.

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