

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) precautions



What is a traumatic brain injury (TBI)?

A traumatic brain injury is a sudden injury to the head, which causes damage to the brain. The damage may include bruising, swelling, bleeding or tearing of nerve fibers within the brain. Millions of people suffer from brain injuries each year.

What are TBI precautions?

TBI precautions are guidelines:

- To help keep your child safe after a TBI. Following these can help prevent further injury.
- Are advised for at least 1 year from the time of injury. Your child's doctor will let you know when your child no longer needs to follow these guidelines.

How can I help keep my child safe while following TBI precautions?

Your child's symptoms depend on how severe (bad) the brain injury is and how much time has passed since the TBI. No matter the symptoms, your child should always have adult supervision. Your child should also avoid certain activities until cleared by the doctor. This includes:

- Playing contact sports (like basketball, football, soccer, lacrosse and hockey).
- Riding roller coasters or other amusement or water park rides.
- Diving when swimming.
- Jumping on a trampoline or jumping off a raised surface.
- Riding horses.
- Riding bikes.
- Using motor vehicles or toys. This includes 4-wheelers or ATV vehicles, dirt bikes, golf carts, hoverboards and motorized scooters.

Your child should also:

- Avoid any other activity that could injure the head. **After your child's doctor clears your child to return to approved activities, they should wear a helmet as appropriate.**
- Wear a seatbelt or ride in a car seat, as appropriate for their age.

What else do I need to know?

Your child is at risk for seizures due to the TBI. Talk with your child's care team and ask for the "Seizures" teaching sheet to learn more about how to help keep your child safe during a seizure.

Call 911 **right away** if your child stops breathing or turns blue during a seizure.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.