



## TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI) IN THE MILITARY

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a significant health issue which affects service members and veterans during times of both peace and war. The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center reported over the past 14 years, the Department of Defense has medically diagnosed over 300,000 cases of traumatic brain injury.

### What is Traumatic Brain Injury?

Traumatic Brain Injury is any injury to the brain caused by an external blow or jolt to the head or penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. Not all blows or jolts to the head result in TBI.

### General signs and symptoms.

Physical	Cognitive (mental activities)	Emotional
Headaches	Confusion/Agitation	Depression
Changes in sleep	Attention problems	Anxiety
Dizziness	Memory problems	Irritability
Balance problems	Difficulty with decision making	Impulsivity
Fatigue	Difficulty with speech	Mood swings
Sexual dysfunction	Slowed thinking	Inappropriate behavior
Seizures		Acting out of character
Sensory changes		
Loss of strength		

### Treatment.

Be evaluated by a medical professional trained in the management and treatment of traumatic brain injury. Start with talking about your concerns with your primary care physician.

### How you can help.

Health tips:

- Stay organized by following routines
- Get 7-8 hours of sleep
- Avoid overdoing mental and physical activities
- Avoid smoking
- Avoid drinking alcohol or energy drinks
- Do not isolate yourself
- Avoid using texting devices, computer monitors and television screens.

*For your convenience in finding behavioral health resources, The Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH), in partnership with the Missouri Behavioral Health Alliance (MOBHA), has compiled this list. These links will take you out of the DMH website. DMH and MOBHA do not endorse or take responsibility for the content of other organizations' websites.*

#### **Additional resources.**

*BrainLineMilitary.org* provides military-specific information and resources on traumatic brain injury to veterans, service members in all branches of service, and their families. Through videos, webcasts, articles, personal stories, research briefs, and current news, those whose lives have been affected by TBI can learn more about brain injury symptoms and treatment, rehabilitation, and family issues associated with TBI care and recovery. [www.brainlinemilitary.org/](http://www.brainlinemilitary.org/)

The Brain Injury Guide & Resources is a tool for those seeking to cope with and understand Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). [www.braininjuryeducation.org/](http://www.braininjuryeducation.org/)

The Center for Excellence for Medical Multimedia has information on TBI to include a *caregiver's guide*. Topics include managing the physical effects, behavioral effects, planning for the future and more. [www.traumaticbraininjuryatoz.org/](http://www.traumaticbraininjuryatoz.org/)

The *Psychological Health Resource Center* offers access to the professional health resource consultants with expertise in psychological health who understand the military culture. The center is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week through call (866) 966-1020, email [resources@phcoe.org](mailto:resources@phcoe.org) or live chat (visit website for chat link). <https://www.pdhealth.mil/resource-center/call-centers/psychological-health-resource-center>

**Are you an employer wanting to hire qualified Veterans and learn how to accommodate wounded warriors?** *America's Heroes at Work* is a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) project that addresses the employment challenges of returning Service Members and Veterans. Designed for employers and the workforce development system, this website is your link to information and tools to help returning Service Members and Veterans living with TBI and/or PTSD succeed in the workplace. [www.dol.gov/vets/ahaw/](http://www.dol.gov/vets/ahaw/)

*Back to School Guide to Academic Success after Traumatic Brain Injury Booklet*. This booklet provides guidance to service members and veterans who have ongoing symptoms from a TBI and are going to college, university or vocational school. It gives answers to common questions about accommodation plans, financial aid and assistive technology. <https://dvbic.dcoe.mil/material/back-school-guide>

*For more information, contact the nearest community mental health center or the Missouri Department of Mental Health's Division of Behavioral Health (800) 575-7480 or visit [www.dmh.mo.gov](http://www.dmh.mo.gov)*