

# Health Awareness



## Brain Injury: Returning Headaches A Serious Signal

(NAPSA)—Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a serious public health problem, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—some 2.5 million occur a year—but knowing a few facts can help protect yourself and your family.

### Silent But Deadly

A TBI is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain.

One of the most serious problems is what's known as "talk and die syndrome." The head injury sufferer is able to walk, talk and behave "normally" immediately after, and everyone thinks he or she is just fine. Then, hours later, headaches and irritability develop and the victim succumbs to the injury.

### What To Do

That's why it's wise to err on the side of caution and get medical help immediately when a head injury may be involved. In addition, all concussion victims should take a complete break from cognitive as well as physical activity for the first three to five days, then try some light cognitive tasks and see how it goes. If headaches or dizziness come back, it's not time to resume activity. Stay vigilant and promptly seek medical attention if headaches reappear. The headaches may indicate a brain injury but no one may have been thinking about a brain injury when the event occurred. Some head injury symptoms don't show up until the person starts resuming everyday life and its demands.

### What Causes TBI

Falls are the leading reason people have head injuries but they can also be due to slow-speed car accidents and sports injuries, par-



**A blow to the head may not seem serious at first, so knowing what to look for days and weeks later as you resume regular daily activity is important.**

ticularly bicycling. The severity may range from "mild," brief change in mental status or consciousness to "severe," an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia.

### Who Gets Hurt

Men are more likely to have TBI hospitalizations than women, and children under 4 and adults over 65 are more likely than others to be hospitalized. African Americans have a higher death rate from brain injury than any other ethnic group; 25 percent higher than for the overall population.

### Signs and Symptoms

Most people understand headaches follow concussions, often starting immediately after the blow to the head occurs. What many do not realize, however, is that these headaches can become permanent and life threatening and may not occur immediately but long after a seemingly innocuous incident.

### Learn More

For further facts on handling brain injuries including whether you might need a lawyer, get a free guide at <http://accidentattorneys.org>.