

# Traumatic brain injury: Effects on speech

Ways to Wellness™ Integrative Medicine for Kids

## What is traumatic brain injury?

Traumatic brain injury (often called TBI) occurs when there is damage to the brain. The injury may or may not result in a loss of consciousness. The effect of traumatic brain injury will differ from person to person. The short- and long-term effects will vary based on severity of the injury, age at the time of injury, and abilities before the injury.

## What should I expect?

**Effects may include one or more of the following:**

- trouble with word-finding
- short-term memory loss
- disorganization of thoughts and speech
- difficulty understanding information
- impaired social skills
- weakness in face muscles
- trouble producing speech sounds
- trouble saying words
- eating and swallowing problems
- inattention
- mood swings
- trouble showing emotion
- impulsiveness (acting before thinking)
- change in energy level
- confusion

It is important to remember that your child can continue to have changes with the above effects over time.

## What can I do to help my child?

- Speak slowly and clearly to your child. Use short sentences.
- Break directions down into smaller steps. Repeat directions as necessary.
- Allow your child extra time to respond.
- Allow your child extra time to complete tasks.
- Let your child rest or nap often. Be patient.
- Expect frustration for you and your child.
- Encourage routines and schedules. Try writing the schedule down or drawing it for your child.
- Avoid distractions (such as TV, radio, clutter).

## What else do I need to know?

You and your child may benefit from the services of many different professionals and agencies during recovery, including:

- child life specialists
- doctors
- neuropsychologists
- occupational therapists
- physical therapists
- school and county services
- speech-language pathologists
- support groups

## **Questions?**

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call the nearest Children's Developmental and Rehabilitation department.

Children's - Minneapolis  
612-813-6709

Children's - St. Paul  
651-220-6880

Children's Clinics - Woodwinds  
651-232-6860

Children's - Maple Grove  
763-416-8700

Children's - Roseville  
651-638-1670

Children's Minnetonka  
952-930-8630

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our website: [childrensMN.org/A-Z](http://childrensMN.org/A-Z).

**For more information call 612-813-7888  
Integrative Medicine Clinic  
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota**