

Traumatic Brain Injury: Common Changes

Traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) can cause a wide range of changes in a person. The following changes are common, and many can improve with treatment. Here are common changes after a TBI:

Physical changes. The person may be physically weaker, have difficulty walking or balancing, have headaches, feel dizzy, and/or have seizures.

Thinking changes. They may have difficulty with short- or long-term memory, paying attention, solving problems, and/or making plans.

Communication changes. They may have difficulty with language, including finding the right words or understanding them, and/or speech, including having weak or disordinated muscles that make their speech sound slurred or mumbled.

Swallowing changes. They may experience difficulty chewing and/or swallowing, which can make eating and drinking challenging or even unsafe.

Socializing changes. They may have a harder time reading and responding to social cues and norms, such as avoiding interrupting or acting politely.

Mood changes. They may have more intense or rapidly changing emotions, which can lead to them acting differently.

Sensation changes. They may experience difficulties with any of their senses, including double vision, hearing loss, and/or increased sensitivity to sight, sound, and touch.

The person who experienced a TBI may have some or all of the above changes. They are big yet common changes that your care team is familiar with. **For more support in the above areas,** reach out to the speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse, physician, neurologist, medical social worker, and/or case manager. They are on your team!