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Brain Injury Resources

- ABIN-PA InfoLine
800-516-8052 www.abin-pa.org
- Area Agency on Aging (phone book)
- BIAA Help Line
800-444-6443 www.biausa.org
- BIAPA Resource Line
866-635-7097 www.biapa.org
- Brain Injury Help Line 866-412-4755
(free literature, books)
- Disability RightsNetwork(SpEd,TBI,SS)
800-692-7443 [ww.drnpa.org](http://www.drnpa.org)
- Elks Nurses (PA) 814-781-7860
(care planning for children)
- Head Injury Program 717-772-2762
(1 year of rehab, \$100,000 max)
- Health Law Project 800-274-3258
(help with public benefits)
- Legal Aid (PA) 800-322-7572
- Meals on Wheels www.mealcall.org
- Medicaid Waivers 800-757-5042
(lifetime CommCare, OBRA, etc.)
- Medical Assistance 866-542-3015
(all disabled children are eligible)
- Medicare Coverage 800-633-4227
(24/7 line, A & B in-home services)
- Medicare Denials 800-322-1914
- Pittsburgh Area B.I. Alliance
412-761-9870 www.pabia.org
- Social Security 800-772-1213
(survivors, disability, low income)
- Special Ed Consult Line 800-879-2301
- Special Needs Unit 800-521-6860
(child federally entitled to rehab)
- Vocational Rehab www.dli.state.pa.us

BRAIN INJURY BASICS

215-699-2139
1-800-516-8052
info@abin-pa.org
www.abin-pa.org



**ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY
NETWORK OF PENNSYLVANIA**

MISSING SIGNALS.....

Your brain has 100 billion neurons plus 10 to 50 times as many glial cells for support, nourishment, and help in transmitting signals. In brain injury, cells die or become dormant and stop transmitting signals to each other. This prevents neural networking and changes thinking, behavior, and bodily functions.

CELL DAMAGE.....

Brain cells can be damaged by breaking the cell wall or otherwise interfering with the supply of blood or oxygen. Cells need nutrients, safe temperatures, and safe levels of pressure. Poisons are harmful.

COMMON EVENTS.....

Many events may damage brain cells, and the effect is cumulative: alcohol, anaphylactic shock, aneurysm, anoxia, AVM, brain tumor, carbon monoxide, cardiac arrest, chemotherapy, concussion, dehydration, diabetic coma, drowning, drugs, electric shock, explosions, falls, gunshot, hemorrhage, high fever, hyperthermia, hypothermia, infection, malnutrition, poison, radiation, seizures, sepsis, shaking, stroke, suffocation, surgery, whiplash, etc.

MEDICAL TREATMENT.....

Lives are saved and basic skills are re-established—breathing, swallowing, hand control, walking, etc.—through the help of physicians, respiratory therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech & language therapists. The terms mild, moderate or severe indicate the intensity of medical care required.

RESTORATION.....

Repeated efforts may move specific functions to a healthy portion of the brain (plasticity). Chiropractic may restore blood flow to the brain. Hyperbaric oxygen may trigger re-growth of missing portions of the brain. Homeopathy may revive dormant cells in the brain. Energy therapies may re-establish brain to muscle connections. Brain function may improve with active or passive neurofeedback.

REHABILITATION.....

Disability is decreased by timely help to: understand and accept limitations; re-learn academic, social, vocational skills; develop new interests and appropriate vocational goals; use strategies to compensate for deficits; understand, accept and control emotions; minimize fatigue; and avoid cognitive overload and overreaction.

COMMON PROBLEMS.....

COGNITIVE: awareness, focus, judgment, memory, multi-tasking, organization, planning, reasoning, speed, word finding.

PHYSICAL: balance, fatigue, headache, hearing, incontinence, nausea, paralysis, seizures, smell, spasticity, speech, swallowing, taste, vision, weakness.

BEHAVIORAL: agitated, anxious, depressed, egocentric, impulsive, mood changes, unaware of others.

IMPACT.....

Each injury is different but many losses are common: home, family, savings, job, friends, independence.

FURTHER RISKS.....

Re-injury; poverty; homelessness; jail (25-87% of inmates); suicide (5 times average rate); early dementia; misdiagnosis of mental illness or mental retardation; substance abuse.

BE PROACTIVE.....

Focus on interests, safety, peer involvement, and good nutrition. Educate physicians. Use community supports. Get rehabilitation. Get substance abuse treatment & family counseling. ***Expect progress!***