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# Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI): What they are and how to treat them



Traumatic Brain Injuries – or TBIs – impact over 2 million people each year. They're most commonly caused by motor vehicle accidents and sports injuries from activities such as boxing, martial arts, wrestling, and football. But TBIs can also result from slip-and-falls, blunt head trauma, shaken trauma, even seemingly harmless amusement park rides.

Regardless of the cause, any jarring of the pituitary gland can create a chemical disruption between the pituitary and the hypothalamus, causing brain inflammation. That inflammation in turn can cause [hormonal deficiency](#) resulting in cognition, language, and mood impairments, as well as physical functioning issues.

Because of the significant impact of traumatic brain injury, it's important to know what symptoms to look for, what to expect, and [what treatments to consider](#) if you or someone you love has experienced a TBI:

## Symptoms

[Whether the trauma is mild, moderate, or severe, a TBI can still impact the brain's ability to regulate important life-maintaining hormones.](#) The loss of these hormones increases the risk of heart attack and stroke, decreased muscle strength, poor healing, and more frequent infections. In addition to these physical symptoms, TBIs can also cause emotional instability, depression, anxiety, mood swings, as well as cognitive symptoms including memory loss, fatigue, and loss of communication skills. Other symptoms may include nausea, severe headaches, tinnitus, light sensitivity, and insomnia.

Traumatic brain injury seems to make patients particularly susceptible to depressive episodes, delusional disorder, and personality disturbances, along with an increased vulnerability to psychiatric illness in some individuals which can last for decades.

## Treatment Options

While traditional treatment typically includes a combination of physical and occupational therapy, counseling, anger management, and pharmaceuticals, [Replenish Wellness Therapy](#) approaches the evaluation and treatment of brain trauma-related illnesses from a different perspective. [Dr. Thacker and his team at Replenish Wellness Therapy](#) work to augment those treatments – or even replace medications in some instances – with hormones and nutritional supplements chosen to improve brain function and reduce swelling. Using a simple blood test, Dr. Thacker is able to identify specific deficiencies in the level of brain hormones that are frequently associated with the development of neuroinflammation. This is the root cause of all resulting psychological, physiological, and physical functioning changes. Using this blood panel, Dr. Thacker can then build a personalized regimen of nutraceuticals to treat specific TBI symptoms for each patient, drawing from a host of vitamins and nutritional supplements.

### Which nutraceuticals may help?

Research shows that Vitamins B2, B3, C, D, and E all have a role in the treatment of concussion symptoms, either alone or in conjunction with other supplements or pharmacological treatments.

- **Flavonoids**, such as resveratrol, are antioxidants that have anti-inflammatory properties, and animal studies have shown they can reduce brain inflammation following a TBI.
- **Omega 3 Fatty Acids** can help prevent concussion and the neurobehavioral/cognitive effects that may follow brain injury.
- **Curcumin**, a phytochemical found in the spice turmeric, may assist in improving balance and reducing neuroinflammation (swelling in the brain).
- **Melatonin**, a naturally occurring hormone that impacts the sleep-wake cycle, may also have a neuroprotective role in TBI, specifically reducing swelling in the brain and improving cognition and neurological function.
- **Creatine**, a supplement that increases muscle mass, may also have neuroprotective effects that aid in TBI treatment by improving cognition, behavior, communication, personality, and self-care, while decreasing fatigue, headaches, and dizziness.

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- **Coenzyme Q10**, a naturally occurring antioxidant in the human body, can reduce neurodegeneration, or the death of brain cells, and increase blood supply to the brain.
- **Magnesium**, a mineral found in the human body, plays a critical role in brain health, promoting functional recovery from TBI. Similarly, low levels of dietary magnesium may lead to poorer recovery outcomes from TBI.

It's clear that many vitamins and supplements have the potential to aid in the prevention, treatment, and overall recovery from concussion and other traumatic brain injuries.

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If you or a loved one are suffering from a brain injury, don't overlook the important role nutrients and vitamins may play in recovery. [Contact Replenish Wellness Center in Huntsville to schedule a consultation with Dr. Thacker and begin a personalized patient care plan to complement your TBI treatment.](#)

### Want to learn more about TBI?

Get an inside look at what brain trauma looks like from a survivor's perspective in the documentary **Quiet Explosions: Healing the Brain**, from two-time EMMY award winning producer and director Jerri Sher. She shares the stories of five individuals with diverse backgrounds, each with a different form of trauma, each living on the edge of life, and each triumphant with hope and a renewal of life.

For an even deeper dive, check out the book at the heart of the documentary, **Tales from the Blast Factory: A Brain Injured Special Forces Green Beret's Journey Back from the Brink**, written by veterans and brothers Adam and Andrew Marr.