

Life After Concussion:

Building Resilience through education and self-management strategies

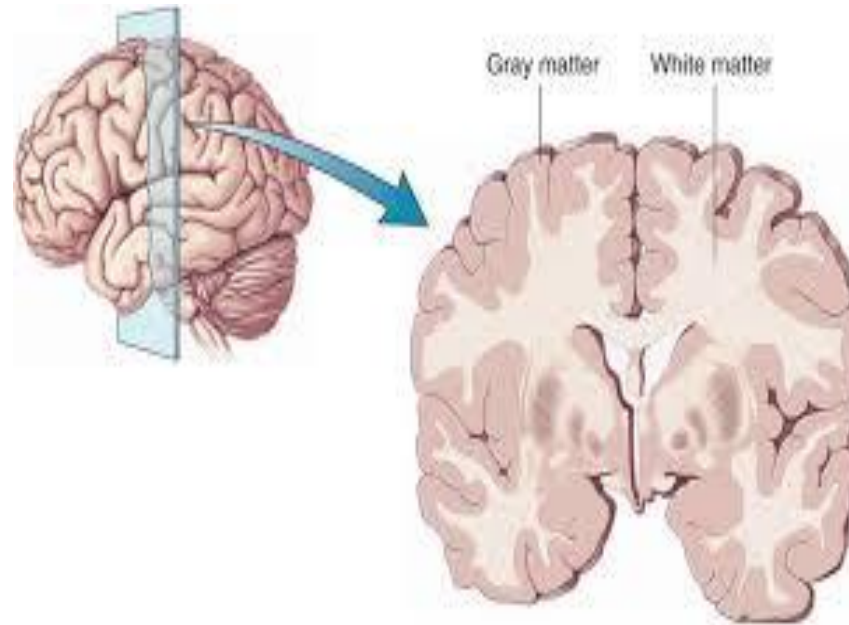


NANAIMO BRAIN INJURY SOCIETY
awareness • support • connection

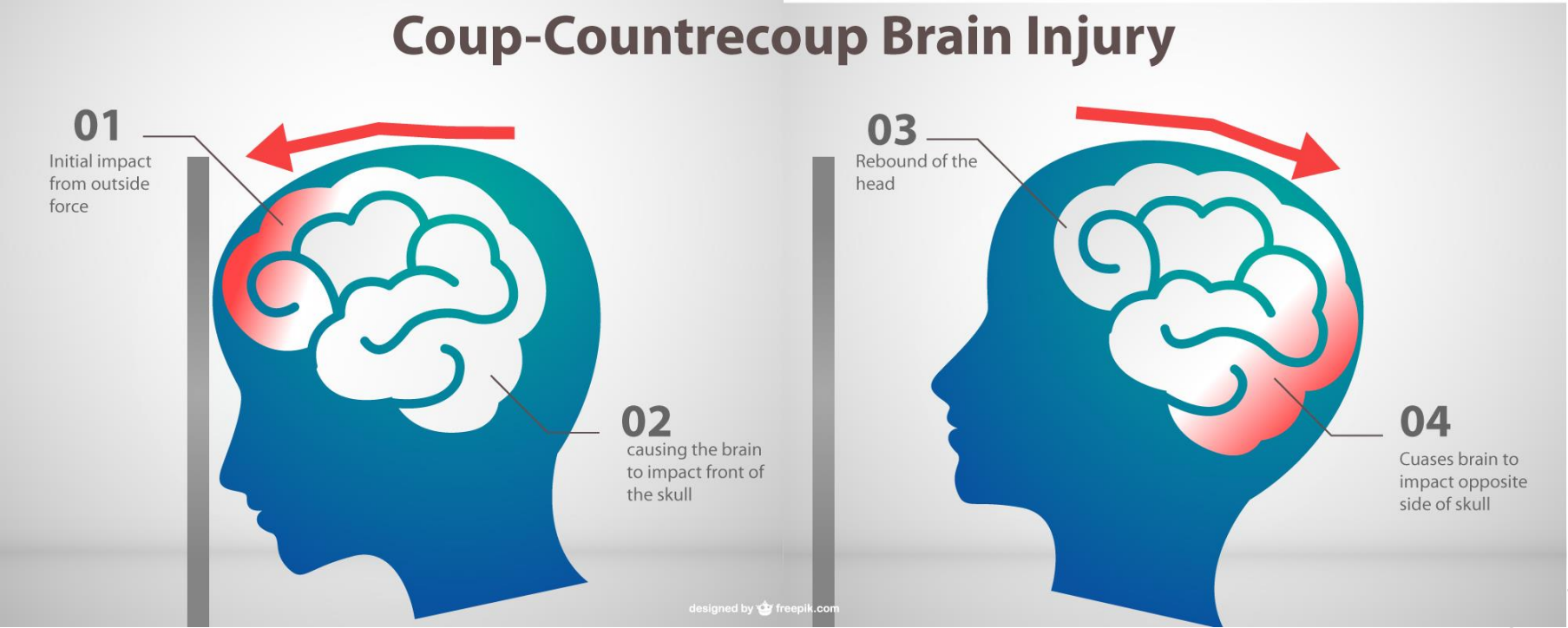


Composition of the brain

- ▶ Soft and squishy- like tapioca!
- ▶ Gray matter
- ▶ White matter
- ▶ Naturally protected- encased in bone, meninges, and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF)

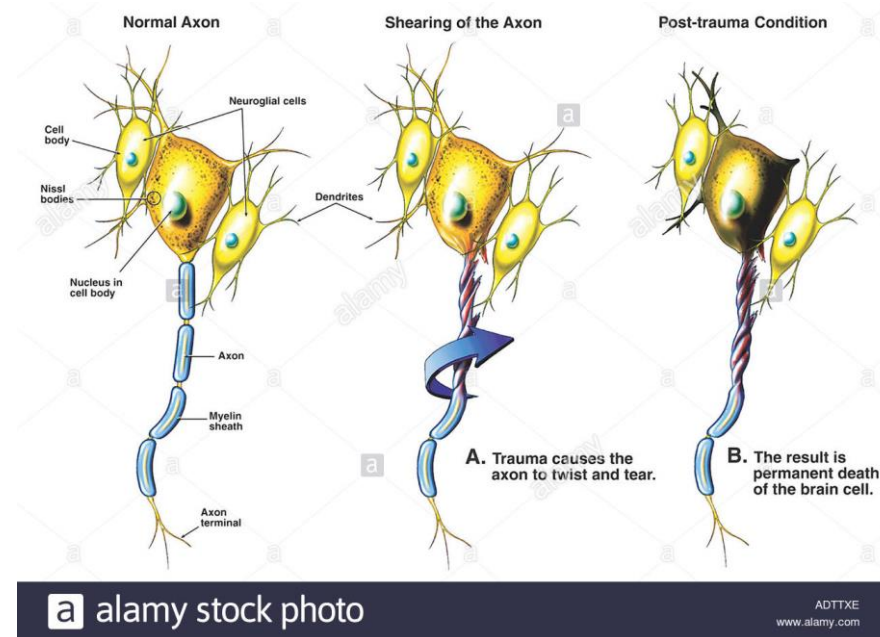


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- ▶ Because the brain tissues have different densities, they stop at different rates from one-another.
- ▶ These differences in “stopping times” lead to different degrees of separations between brain components that can be extreme enough to “shear axons” or tear blood vessels in the brain.
- ▶ Can usually be seen on C-T or MRI



What is a concussion?

- ▶ No universally agreed on definition, but generally means a knock to the head without loss of consciousness or amnesia which results in symptoms immediately afterwards
- ▶ Many consider it a subset of mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI)
- ▶ Axons stretched, not sheared
- ▶ Not visible on C-T or MRI



But I thought stretching was a good thing??

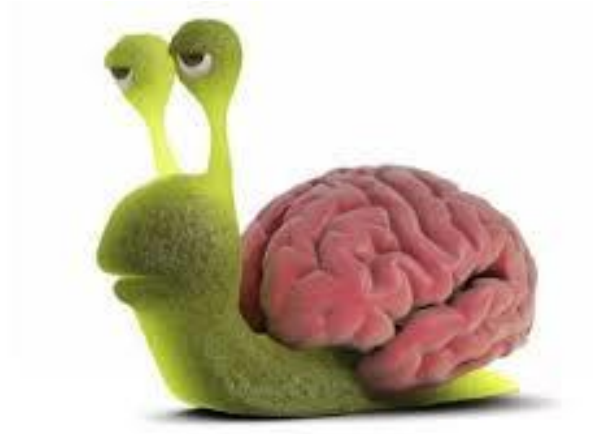
- ▶ stretched axons and astrocyte-blood capillary processes stop functioning as they usually do and these disrupt communication among different sets of neurons around the brain and spinal cord
- ▶ lack of communication among neurons or disrupted nutrient delivery and metabolism in neurons = difficulties with energy levels, behaviours, sensations, motor abilities, moods, and thought processes



Symptoms of concussion

Initial and short-term symptoms:

- ▶ Headache or “pressure in head”
- ▶ Nausea or vomiting
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Blurred vision
- ▶ Ringing in ears
- ▶ Balance problems
- ▶ Sensitivity to light/noise
- ▶ Confusion “in a fog”, difficulty concentrating/remembering
- ▶ Fatigue, change in sleep patterns
- ▶ Emotional difficulties (sad, irritable) depending upon pre-morbid personality



Symptoms of concussion

- ▶ Typically resolve in 7-21 days
- ▶ Symptoms are usually worse at time of injury, then slowly improve
- ▶ Recovery from concussion is complicated by what work we have the CNS do while it's not functioning at its best and *how we react to this state of affairs*
- ▶ Approx 10-15% of individuals who experience concussion report post-concussive symptoms >1 year post-injury



Symptoms of concussion

Lasting symptoms of concussion:

- ▶ Post-concussive Syndrome (PCS) in which symptoms last weeks, months, or even years after injury
- ▶ Risk factors = age & gender, lack of recovery plan with reasonable goals
- ▶ In addition to these symptoms, the individual may experience emotional/psychological reactions to symptoms (identity issues due to changed lifestyle, depression, mood swings, isolation)



Self-Management Strategies

Life After Concussion Workshop

**Building resilience through education
and self-management strategies**

2 Nights: Tuesdays Nov 21 & 28

7pm - 8:30pm

Tillicum Lelum Health Centre

602 Haliburton St.



For more information contact:

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