



NANAIMO BRAIN  
INJURY SOCIETY

awareness • support • connection

**FAQ & Brain Basics**

[brain.jpg](#)



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is brain injury?**

An Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is an injury caused to the brain since birth. Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is an injury to the brain caused by a trauma to the head (head injury). There are many possible causes, including road traffic accidents, assaults, falls and accidents at home or at work. Concussions are classified as a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI).

## **What are the effects of brain injury?**

The effects of a brain injury can be wide ranging, and depend on a number of factors such as the type, location and severity of injury. Every person's injury is unique, so they will experience any number of the symptoms, which can range from mild to severe.

The effects of brain injury can be divided into **three** categories:

### **1) Cognitive effects of brain injury**

The cognitive effects of a brain injury affect the way a person thinks, learns and remembers. Different mental abilities are located in different parts of the brain, so a head injury can damage some, but not necessarily all, skills such as speed of thought, memory, understanding, concentration, solving problems and using language.

### **2) Emotional and behavioral effects of brain injury**

Everyone who has had a head injury can be left with some changes in emotional reaction and behavior. These are more difficult to see than the more obvious problems such as those which affect movement and speech, for example, but can be the most difficult for the individual concerned and their family to deal with.

### **3) Physical effects of brain injury**

Most people make an excellent physical recovery after a brain injury, which can mean there are few, or no, outward signs that an injury has occurred. There are often physical problems present that are not always so apparent, but can have a real impact on daily life.

## **Are there other forms of acquired brain injury?**

Acquired brain injury covers all situations in which brain injury has occurred since birth, and includes traumatic brain injury as well as tumor, stroke, aneurysm, brain hemorrhage and encephalitis, to name a few. The effects are often very similar to those of traumatic brain injury, but there are key differences that make treating and coping with acquired brain injury quite different.

# Brain Basics

## **Brain facts:**

- Your brain weighs about 3lbs, or just under 1.5Kg
- It has the texture of blancmange
- Your brain is connected to your spinal cord by the brain stem

- . Behind your brain stem is the cerebellum
- . The cerebral cortex is the largest part of your brain. It contains the frontal lobes, the motor cortex, sensory cortex and parietal lobes
- . The brain is made up of around 100 billion nerve cells and even more support cells, which provide nourishment to the nerve cells.
- . The largest part of the brain is known as the cerebral cortex and is shaped like a large wrinkled walnut. It is divided into two halves and joined by a bridge in the middle. The two halves are known as the right and left cerebral hemispheres. It is known that the right side controls the left side of our body and the left side controls the right side of our body.

## **Areas of the Brain:**

Apart from dividing into a left and right hemisphere, the cerebral cortex can be further divided into a number of areas known as lobes.

**Frontal Lobe-** The frontal lobe is the area behind the forehead and is heavily involved in intellectual activities such as planning and organizing, as well as being involved in personality and the control of emotions and behavior.

**Motor and Sensory Cortices-** Between the frontal and parietal lobes is the motor cortex which controls movement and the sensory cortex which controls sensation.

**Temporal Lobes-** Nestled behind the ears, this area holds the bulk of our memories and our ability to understand things and speak.

**Parietal Lobes-** Located at the back of the brain above the ears, these have an important role to play in our ability to understand spatial relationships.

**Occipital Lobe-** At the very back of the head are the occipital lobes, which are responsible for sight. Any injury to this area can cause partial or complete blindness.