

Reducing the Risk of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

It is estimated that there are about 1.7 million emergency room visits for TBI in the U.S. each year, in addition to hundreds of thousands of unreported incidents of head trauma, including undiagnosed concussions.

Often, brain injuries that don't result in a loss of consciousness go unnoticed and are never treated. Research shows that undiagnosed brain injuries are a major cause of depression, panic attacks, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, ADD/ADHD, and suicide.

To Help Keep Your Brain Safe and Reduce the Risk of TBI:

- ✓ **Wear a seat belt** every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle.
- ✓ **Always buckle your child into a child safety seat**, booster seat, or seat belt (according to the child's height, weight, and age) in the car.
- ✓ **Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs**, including prescription medications that can impair the ability to drive.
- ✓ **Avoid high risk sports** and activities where you can hit your head and don't do "headers" in soccer!
- ✓ **Always wear a helmet** and make sure your children wear helmets when:
 - Riding a bike, motorcycle, snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle
 - Playing a contact sport, such as football, ice hockey, or boxing
 - Using in-line skates or riding a skateboard
 - Batting and running bases in baseball or softball
 - Riding a horse
 - Skiing or snowboarding
- ✓ **Do not dive in water that is less than 12 feet deep** or in above-ground pools. Always check the depth and check for debris in the water before diving.
- ✓ **Avoid falls in the home by:**
 - Using a step stool with a grab bar to reach objects on high shelves
 - Installing handrails on stairways and grab bars next to the toilet and in the tub or shower
 - Installing window guards to keep young children from falling out of open windows
 - Using safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs when young children are around
 - Removing or securing tripping hazards such as small area rugs and loose electrical cords
 - Using non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors