



Identifying Brain Injury in Children

Identifying brain injury can occur immediately following an injury or several days, weeks or months after. In the event of a life-threatening brain injury, identifying a brain injury early can save lives.

The signs and symptoms of a brain injury can be subtle. Symptoms may even be missed as people "look normal" or "feel fine." Know the signs and symptoms and take brain injury seriously.

If someone's head or body has been hit or jolted, call 911 or go to the emergency room if they are experiencing:

- Confusion or disorientation
- Loss of consciousness
- Severe headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Blood or clear fluid draining from nose or ears
- Weakness, numbness or tingling in limbs
- Trouble walking
- Slurred speech or vision issues
- Seizure

Continue to monitor for signs and symptoms over the next few weeks and months, even if you don't observe any immediately. See a doctor if you notice any of these changes:

- Concentration and memory problems
- Changes in work or school performance
- Delayed thinking and understanding
- Poor balance and coordination
- Sleep disturbances or fatigue
- Ongoing headaches or neck pain

Sensitivity to light and noise
Changes in personality and behavior
Irritability or aggression
Depression or anxiety

HHS has [publications you can download](#) or [order](#) to help you remember these signs and symptoms, or to share with others. Learn more about the signs and symptoms of a brain injury at the [CDC's HEADS UP](#) website or [Brainline.org](#), which also has information about various aspects of life after brain injury.