



## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS Central Texas Veterans Health Care System

# Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Information Sheet

### ***What is a traumatic brain injury?***

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) happens when:

- The head is jolted and the brain moves within the skull
- The head is hit directly or indirectly causing harm to the brain
- An object breaks the skull and physically passes into the brain

Note: Traumatic Brain Injury can occur without any outward signs of injury to the head

Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a **TBI**. TBI from such an injury may range from “mild” i.e. a brief change in mental status or consciousness to “severe” i.e. and extended period of unconsciousness or memory loss after the injury. If you get a TBI you may have problems for a short time or for a long time. These problems may involve remembering, making decisions, problem solving, driving a car, balancing a check book, dressing and bathing, etc.

### ***The leading causes of TBI are:***

- Blasts, bullets, fragments,
- Falls
- Motor vehicle-traffic crashes; and
- Assaults / fighting

### ***Why am I being screened for Traumatic Brain Injury?***

VA wants to provide you with the highest quality health care. We offer all veterans / active duty service members who served in the combat theaters of Iraq or Afghanistan screening for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). You are at risk for TBI if you were involved in a:

- Blast or explosion (IED, RPG, Land Mines, Grenades, etc.)
- Vehicular Accident / Crash
- Fragment Wound Above the Shoulder
- Fall

*Please turn page for information regarding assistance,  
and directions to the Temple VA TBI clinic*

## **How can you get help with Recovery from TBI:**

- Get plenty of sleep at night, and don't overexert yourself during the day.
- Return to normal activities little by little, not all at once
- Don't drink alcohol; it may slow your brain recovery and puts you at further risk of injury
- To help you remember:

1. Write things down you don't want to forget
2. If you find you are losing important items – begin putting them in the same place all of the time
3. Park in the same place so you can find your car
4. Keep a note book to write down important information
5. Ask others to help remind you of important dates / times

- If you are easily distracted or having trouble concentrating, try doing only one thing at a time in a quiet environment.
- If you feel irritable, then remove yourself from the situation that's irritating you
- Use relaxation techniques to help manage the situation. You may be more **irritable** when **you are tired**, so be sure to get enough rest
- Keep your brain active by doing things that require thinking and fine motor skills; like crossword puzzles, playing a musical instrument, drawing, writing, painting, playing cards or board games.

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### **Driving Directions to Temple VAMC**

Take I-35 Exit 299. Head towards Cameron (approximately 4 miles) – take sharp left hand turn just after going under train trestle, go past Temple college, at second traffic light, turn into VA. It is strongly recommended that Patients park at Valet Parking.

### **Directions to Physical Medicine TBI Clinic**

Check in at the basement of the Teague Tower (Large Beige Building)  
Room BB120 (Opposite the convenience store)

For more information, feel free to call Randy at 254.743.2808