

Rural Health Equity Toolkit

A language and resource guide for practicing health equity in rural settings.

Traumatic Brain Injury

Key Term:

Traumatic Brain Injury

A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body or a penetrating injury like a gunshot.

~ *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Acquired Brain injury can be Non-Traumatic, Traumatic or Degenerative.

Examples of Non-Traumatic TBI include: stroke, brain tumor, meningitis, seizures, anoxia (strangulation, drug overdose, drowning), and neurotoxic poisoning.

Introduction and Background

While anyone can be at risk of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), long term health problems persist in populations that historically have greater difficulty accessing healthcare.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](#), older adults, racial and ethnic minorities, veterans, and survivors of domestic violence are among the groups who experience poorer health outcomes after a TBI.

Rural people are more likely to sustain a TBI and even have higher death rates compared to those living in urban areas because of factors such as lack of access to transportation, insurance, and/or trauma units.

Screening for prior brain injury and recognizing common symptoms can help encourage people who may have a TBI to seek appropriate care. Learning about accommodation strategies and resources available to survivors and their families can help in the long-term rehabilitation process.

★ TENNESSEE TBI TRENDS

Among TBI patients
45 YEARS or OLDER,
MOST INJURIES
occurred due to
UNINTENTIONAL FALLS



TBIs caused by
UNINTENTIONAL FALLS were
MOST COMMON
in **FEMALE PATIENTS**
65 YEARS or OLDER

82%
of registry
patients
had
MODERATELY SEVERE TBIs



Among TBI patients
44 YEARS or YOUNGER,
MOST INJURIES
occurred due to **MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES**



The number of TBIs resulting from
MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES was
NEARLY DOUBLE
(1.9 times) in **MALE PATIENTS** compared to female patients

HISPANIC
patients had the
HIGHEST number of WORK-RELATED INJURIES



Source: [Tennessee Department of Health 2023 Annual Report](#)



Resources to Explore

- **Tennessee Disability Coalition, Brain Links:** [Toolkits, Webinars, and Resources for School Health, Providers, & Families](#)
- **Brain Links:** [YouTube Training Channel](#)
- **Tennessee Department of Health:** [TBI Advisory, Reports, and Resources](#)
- **CDC TBI & Concussion:** [Resources for families and training for clinical providers](#)
- **Rural Health Info Hub:** [Rural Monitor TBI](#)
- **Brain Injury Association of Tennessee:** [Support Groups and Education](#)
- **Brain Injury Association:** [Communication Toolkit for Advocates](#)
- **BrainLine.org:** [Communicating with Patients & Families; Avoiding Guilt and Blame](#)
- **ACRM (Rehabilitative Medicine):** [Supportive Communication for People with Aphasia](#)
- **Lurie Institute for Disability Policy:** [Inclusive Language Usage Guide](#)
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** [988lifeline.org](#)
- **Rural Health Association of Tennessee:** [Resource Center](#) or [Health Equity Toolkit](#)