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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/coma.html>

## Coma

A coma is a deep state of unconsciousness. An individual in a coma is alive but unable to move or respond to his or her environment. Coma may occur as a complication of an underlying illness, or as a result of injuries, such as **brain injury** [<https://medlineplus.gov/traumaticbraininjury.html>] .



A coma rarely lasts more than 2 to 4 weeks. The outcome for coma depends on the cause, severity, and site of the damage. People may come out of a coma with physical, intellectual, and psychological problems. Some people may remain in a coma for years or even decades. For those people, the most common cause of death is infection, such as pneumonia.

*NIH: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke*

### Start Here

- **Stupor and Coma** [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/brain-spinal-cord-and-nerve-disorders/coma-and-impaired-consciousness/stupor-and-coma>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/enfermedades-cerebrales-medulares-y-nerviosas/coma-y-alteraci%C3%B3n-de-la-consciencia/estupor-y-coma>]



### Related Issues

- **Locked-in Syndrome** [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/locked-syndrome>]  
 (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)** [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/traumatic-brain-injury-tbi>]  
 (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/es/health-information/disorders/lesion-cerebral-traumatica-lct>]

### Specifics

- **Diabetic Coma** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/diabetic-coma/symptoms-causes/syc-20371475?p=1>]  
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/diabetic-coma/symptoms-causes/syc-20371475?p=1>]

### Clinical Trials

- **ClinicalTrials.gov: Coma** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Coma%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  
 (National Institutes of Health)
- **ClinicalTrials.gov: Persistent Vegetative State** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Persistent+Vegetative+State%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

### Journal Articles



References and abstracts from **MEDLINE/PubMed** (National Library of Medicine)

- **Article: Comprehensive observations and multidisciplinary approaches (COMA) in the management of unconscious...** [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40711621>]


Article: Association of early in-hospital endotracheal intubation with clinical outcomes in patients...  
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40635071>]

- Article: Pupil constrictions to subjective brightness as a gateway to probe consciousness...  
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40634411>]
- Coma -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Coma%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Persistent+Vegetative+State%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

## Reference Desk

- Cerebral Hypoxia [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/glossary-neurological-terms#cerebral%20hypoxia>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- Coma [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/glossary-neurological-terms#coma>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)  
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.ninds.nih.gov/es/trastornos/coma>]

## Find an Expert

- American Academy of Neurology [<https://www.aan.com/>]
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/>] 

## Patient Handouts

- EEG [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003931.htm>]



## MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Cerebral hypoxia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001435.htm>]

EEG [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm>]

## Related Health Topics

Traumatic Brain Injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/traumaticbraininjury.html>]

## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Coma* is the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke  
[<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/>]

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