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

Concussion

Also called: Brain concussion

A concussion is a type of brain injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/traumaticbraininjury.html>] . It involves a short loss of normal brain function. It happens when a hit to the head [<https://medlineplus.gov/headinjuries.html>] or body causes your head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in your brain. Sometimes it can also stretch and damage your brain cells.

Sometimes people call a concussion a "mild" brain injury. It is important to understand that while concussions may not be life-threatening, they can still be serious.

Concussions are a common type of sports injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/sportsinjuries.html>] . Other causes of concussions include blows to the head, bumping your head when you fall, being violently shaken, and car accidents.


Symptoms of a concussion may not start right away; they may start days or weeks after the injury. Symptoms may include a headache or neck pain. You may also have nausea, ringing in your ears, dizziness, or tiredness. You may feel dazed or not your normal self for several days or weeks after the injury. Consult your health care professional if any of your symptoms get worse, or if you have more serious symptoms such as:

- Convulsions or seizures
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Confusion
- Slurred speech
- Loss of consciousness

To diagnose a concussion, your health care provider will do a physical exam and will ask about your injury. You will most likely have a neurological exam, which checks your vision, balance, coordination, and reflexes. Your health care provider may also evaluate your memory and thinking. In some cases, you may also have a scan of the brain, such as a CT scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ctscans.html>] or an MRI [<https://medlineplus.gov/mriscans.html>] . A scan can check for bleeding or inflammation in the brain, as well as a skull fracture [<https://medlineplus.gov/fractures.html>] (break in the skull).

Most people recover fully after a concussion, but it can take some time. Rest is very important after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. In the very beginning, you may need to limit physical activities or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games. Doing these may cause concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness) to come back or get worse. Then when your health care provider says that it is ok, you can start to return to your normal activities slowly.


Start Here

- **Caring for Concussions: More Than a Bump on the Head** [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2020/05/caring-concussions>]  (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/cuidado-ante-conmociones-cerebrales>]
- **Concussion** [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/concussion/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/conmocion-es/?adfree=true>]
- **Concussion** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/concussion/symptoms-causes/syc-20355594?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- **Concussion Basics** [<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/about/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Concussions in Kids** [<https://familydoctor.org/concussions-in-kids/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/conmocion-cerebral-en-ninos/?adfree=true>]

Symptoms

- **Concussions (For Parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/concussions.html>] (Nemours Foundation) - **In English and Spanish**
- **Signs and Symptoms of Concussion** [<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/signs-symptoms/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Symptoms of Mild TBI and Concussion** [<https://www.cdc.gov/traumatic-brain-injury/signs-symptoms/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Diagnosis and Tests

- **Concussion Tests** [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/concussion-tests/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/pruebas-de-conmocion-cerebral/>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- **Preventing Concussion** [<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/prevention/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Treatments and Therapies

- **Concussions (For Parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/concussions.html>] (Nemours Foundation) - **In English and Spanish**



Related Issues

- **Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/chronic-traumatic-encephalopathy/symptoms-causes/syc-20370921?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/chronic-traumatic-encephalopathy/symptoms-causes/syc-20370921?p=1>]
- **Persistent Post-Concussive Symptoms (Post-Concussion Syndrome)** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-concussion-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20353352?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/post-concussion-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20353352?p=1>]



Specifics

- **What to Do after a Mild TBI or Concussion** [<https://www.cdc.gov/traumatic-brain-injury/response/>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Videos and Tutorials

- **Concussion** [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/anatomyvideos/000034.htm>]  (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/anatomyvideos/000034.htm>]
- **HEADS UP to Youth Sports Coaches: Online Concussion Training** [<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/training/youth-sports.html>]  (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Statistics and Research

- Biomarkers Identified in Collegiate Athletes That Could Help Predict Time Needed to Recover From Concussion [<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/biomarkers-identified-collegiate-athletes-could-help-predict-time-needed-recover-concussion>]  (National Institute of Nursing Research)
- Blood-based Biomarker Can Detect, Predict Severity of Traumatic Brain Injury [<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/blood-based-biomarker-can-detect-predict-severity-traumatic-brain-injury>]  (National Institutes of Health, Clinical Center)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Brain Concussion [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Brain+Concussion%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Brain Injuries [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Brain+Injuries%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Craniocerebral Trauma [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Craniocerebral+Trauma%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

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

- Article: Prevalence of mild cognitive impairment among former elite athletes without a... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40738638>]
- Article: Interprofessional Approaches to the Treatment of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury: A... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40700111>]
- Article: E-concussion? an investigation of the representation of head impact events and... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40694542>]
- Concussion -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Brain+Concussion%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+>]

Find an Expert


- American Academy of Neurology [<https://www.aan.com/>]
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]

Children

- Concussion Information Sheet [https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/parent_athlete_info_sheet-a.pdf]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/esp/parent_athlete_info_sheet_spanish-a.pdf]

- Heads Up: A Fact Sheet for Athletes Ages 11-13 [https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/media/pdfs/youthsports/factsheet_athletes_ages11-13-a.pdf] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) - **PDF**

Teenagers

- Concussions: Know the Basics [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/center/concussions-ctr.html>]  (Nemours Foundation)
- School and Concussions [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/school-concussions.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/school-concussions.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Concussion - adults - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000126.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000126.htm>]
- Concussion - child - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000125.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000125.htm>]
- Preventing head injuries in children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000130.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000130.htm>]
- Traumatic brain injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000799.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000799.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Concussion [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/anatomyvideos/000034.htm>]

Concussion - adults - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000126.htm>]

Concussion - child - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000125.htm>]

Concussion in adults - what to ask your doctor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000212.htm>]

Concussion in children - what to ask your doctor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000213.htm>]

Head CT scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003786.htm>]

Preventing head injuries in children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000130.htm>]

Skull x-ray [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003802.htm>]

Traumatic brain injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000799.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Head Injuries [<https://medlineplus.gov/headinjuries.html>]

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

National Institutes of Health

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

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/concussion.html>] on *Concussion*

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

5 Things Parents Should Know about Concussions [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/5-things-parents-should-know-about-concussions>]

Head Start on Concussion Recovery [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/a-head-start-on-concussion-recovery>]

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