

What Can I Do?

1. Monitor for symptoms
2. Limit tasks that take a lot of energy or increase symptoms
3. PACE activities
4. REST between activities
5. Plan and Prioritize activities

What is Pacing?

- Not doing too many activities in one day or at one period of time
- Building rest breaks into the day - i.e., 15 min/hour
- Alternating types of activities - i.e., Thinking (banking) vs Doing (dishes)
- Reducing activities that increase symptoms (TV, busy or crowded environments)

Return to the Emergency Department immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Seizures
- Difficulty waking up
- Weakness or numbness
- Difficulty walking or talking, changes in speech
- Worsening headache
- Persistent vomiting (more than 3 times)
- Changes in behavior (i.e., increased confusion or irritability)
- Blurry or double vision
- Fluid or blood from nose or ears

Where can I get more information about concussions?

Parachute Canada

www.parachutecanada.org

Brainline

www.brainline.org

Brain trauma foundation

www.braintrauma.org

Ontario Brain Injury Association

www.obia.ca

Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation

www.onf.org



Mild Traumatic Brain Injury

What is a mild traumatic brain injury?

- A mild traumatic brain injury (or what is sometimes called a concussion) is caused by rapid, forceful movement of the brain inside the skull. It can result from a blow to the head, face, neck or body and may include a brief loss of consciousness.
- Some symptoms of a mild traumatic brain injury will appear right away, while others may develop hours or days after the injury. Every person experiences symptoms differently, depending on many factors.
- The amount of time one person needs to recover or heal is different from another person.

Potential Symptoms You May Experience:

Physical Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Dizziness • Nausea or vomiting • Light or noise sensitivity • Fatigue • Ringing in the ears (tinnitus) • Balance difficulties
Cognitive Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty concentrating or paying attention • Difficulty making decisions or problem solving, • Memory problems • Feeling “foggy”
Emotions / Mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability • Feeling frustrated • Depression • Anxiety • Feeling tearful
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trouble finding the right word • Trouble getting thoughts/ ideas out • Trouble following conversations • Difficulty reading and writing
Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty falling or staying asleep • Feeling drowsy • Desire to sleep more than prior to injury
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blurred or double vision • Movement of print or stationary objects (such as walls or floor) • Visual fatigue

How to feel better:

1. **REST!** - plenty of rest and sleep. A brain injury is initially treated with physical, mental and visual rest.
2. **Avoid activities that are stimulating to the brain.** These include: physical exertion (brisk walking, running, cycling); mental stimulation (going to school/work; reading, driving); and environmental stimulation (noisy environments, bright lights, television, computers, smart phones).

What Should I Expect?

During your recovery you could have a number of symptoms – some appear right away while others you may not notice for hours or even days after the injury. Some people don’t realize they have any problems until they try and go back to their normal routine, including return to work or school.

When will I feel better?

Everyone is different! You should start to feel better within the first few days and most people will feel back to normal within a month BUT full recovery may take up to 3 months or longer. Your recovery depends on how fast your brain can heal and this is different for each person because every brain is different.

Symptoms will likely become worse if you ignore them and try to "push through". This can lead to a longer recovery time and potentially to persistent symptoms.

How can I plan and pace my recovery?

The brain doesn’t work as efficiently or effectively as it did before your injury. You may have returned to your pre-injury level of activity, but struggle with being able to complete tasks as well or as fast as you did before.

****Remember:** What you do, and how long you do it for, can impact your degree of symptoms.