

# Types and Severity of Traumatic Brain Injury

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If you have suffered a traumatic brain injury as the result of someone's negligence in California, [contact Johnson Attorneys Group](#) at 1 (800) 208-3538 today for a [free case evaluation](#). There are no legal fees until we recover compensation for you. Let us handle the legal work so you can focus on your health.

## What is a Traumatic Brain Injury?

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***A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is an injury resulting to the brain.*** Because the brain is a complex structure that can be injured in many different ways there are different types of TBIs. Each has a different level of severity and it's important to understand that everything from a concussion as the result of falling to a penetrating head wound as a result of a gunshot are all different types of TBI. Some places that have a higher rate of TBI's are professions in the military, athletics, mining, and those place that require working with heavy machinery. You'll notice that all these professions take certain precautions—namely the requirement of hard-hats and/or helmets—to help prevent and mitigate the effects of a TBI. ***Regardless, not all these methods are effective*** and can still result in a TBI.

## The 6 Different Types of TBI

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There are primarily six different types of traumatic brain injury. Remember that severity and type are different. Someone might have a penetrating head wound and still be classified fairly low on the severity scale, whereas someone may have a concussion that results in debilitating factors. ***The type of TBI is not always a precursor to the severity of the injury.***

1. **Concussion:** The most common of TBI, a concussion can be of any severity and is most often a result of direct blows to the head, violent shaking, and whiplash. Concussions are the result of the blood vessels in the brain stretching or being damaged. Concussions are difficult to diagnose because they often do not show up under imaging and can have complications lasting years.
2. **Contusion:** More commonly known as “bleeding on the brain”.
3. **Coup-Contrecoup:** Violent impact which results in multiple contusions on the brain.
4. **Diffuse Axonal:** Commonly caused by violent shaking the damage internally to the brain often results in death or disability depending on what tissues of the brain were torn. Car accidents and “Shaken Baby Syndrome” are usually categorized under this TBI.
5. **Penetrating Head Wound:** Any object that penetrates the skull and causes tearing penetration, or severance of brain tissue. Firearms are reportedly the most common

perpetrators in these types of TBI resulting in a 91 percent fatality rate.

6. **ABI (Acquired Brain Injury):** This form of TBI is the result of factors that do not include external force. Medical issues such as strokes, degenerative disease, and drowning can result in ABI conditions. ABI is categorized as either Anoxic or Hypoxic. An Anoxic Brain Injury is a result of oxygen being prevented from reaching the brain. Hypoxic brain injury is the result of blood flow not reaching the brain. Severely high or low blood pressure can result in this.



## The Glasgow Coma Scale

The Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) is a system ***used by medical professionals to assess those with a TBI.*** It operates on a fifteen-point scale. Those fifteen points are broken into three behaviors: eye opening response, best verbal response, and best motor response. A perfect score of fifteen is considered an individual's "best response": the ***lower end of severity.*** An eight or less means that the patient is ***comatose*** while a three, the lowest score possible, means the individual is ***"totally unresponsive"***.

**The fifteen points of the Glasgow Coma Scale, preceded by their categorical behaviors, are:**

### Eye Opening Response:

Spontaneously: 4

To Speech: 3

To Pain: 2

No response: 1

## Best Verbal Response:

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Oriented to time, place, and person: 5

Confused: 4

Inappropriate words: 3

Incomprehensible sounds: 2

No response: 1

## Best Motor Response:

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Obeys commands: 6

Moves to localized pain: 5

Flexion withdrawal from pain: 4

Abnormal flexion: 3

Abnormal extension: 2

No response: 1

## Score Total:

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15: Best response

8 or less: Comatose

3: Unresponsive

***Please remember that just because a person scores high on the GCS doesn't necessarily mean that the severity level of the injury is low.*** The GCS measures an individual's level of coma and is a tool used by medical professionals in the overall assessment of a TBI victim's level of severity; many other tools, tests, and procedures all go into the final medical assessment of an individual's TBI.

## The Scale of Severity

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***The severity of a TBI falls under one of three categories: mild, moderate, and severe.***

Medical professionals assess certain criteria, such as the loss of consciousness and the duration of this loss, when determining a patient's severity. The GCS contributes to the

classification of TBIs. A score of thirteen-to-fifteen usually categorizes the TBI as Mild, while a score of nine-to-twelve is typically accepted as a sign of a Moderate TBI. Anything lower than a nine on the GCS is commonly agreed upon as a Severe TBI.

### *Mild TBI-*

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**Mild TBIs are usually categorized by a brief loss of consciousness lasting no more than a few minutes or a complete lack of loss of consciousness altogether.** In many cases the person may seem disoriented, confused, or “dazed”. All tests and scans of the brain typically return without indication of injury. Individuals who have had a Mild TBI often complain of a **headache as the most common symptom and some mild confusion.** While the headache may persist for some time (up to a week in certain cases) the confusion should dissipate almost immediately. An alteration in a person’s mental faculties at the time of injury to the brain that does not persist past that time frame is usually considered a concussion and mild in nature. Mild TBIs are almost always non-penetrating and are incurred as **a result of impact, whiplash, and even violent shaking of the head**

### *Moderate TBI-*

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Moderate TBIs are usually caused by similar injuries as a Mild TBI: impact to the head, shaking of the head, and whiplash. However, where the symptoms of Mild TBIs “wear-off” after a certain amount of time, **the symptoms of a Moderate TBI can last weeks, months, years, and even a lifetime.** A Moderate TBI can occur when loss of consciousness lasts anywhere from minutes to hours and is usually categorized by **confusion lasting many weeks as well as cognitive and behavior issues lasting for months.** There is some debate as to whether permanent cognitive, physical, and/or behavioral impairments should be classified as Moderate or Severe. This classification is usually left up to healthcare professionals to determine based on quality of living and impact on sociability.

### *Severe TBI-*

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**Severe TBI occur most commonly as a penetrating head wound** (as one might receive if they were shot) and/or a crushing blow (one example would be an individual ejected from a moving car). Though open head wounds are commonly a sign of a Severe TBI it is entirely possible for Severe brain injury to occur without penetration or a crushing blow as is seen in cases of “**Shaken Baby Syndrome**”. In occasions where crushing blows or penetrations occur impact, as well as the puncture and tearing of brain tissues, **results in life-threatening and—generally—permanent brain damage/injury.** Injuries of this nature always require **immediate** medical attention to save the patient’s life.

Contact Our Traumatic Brain Injury Lawyer at Johnson Attorneys Group in California Today

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***Often TBIs are the result of external forces brought on by the negligence or intent of others.*** Medical costs can far extend past a single hospital visit; it isn't uncommon for TBIs to result in a lifelong need for medical care. Whether it's a mild concussion or severe penetrating head wound if you or a loved one has received a TBI please contact our legal services at Johnson Attorneys Group in California to explore your options. ***We can be contacted at any time, have no legal fees unless we win or settle your case,*** and have twelve locations to serve our clients. Your quality of life matters to us and our experienced attorney will fight to get you the care and recompense you deserve.