

# TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS

## Concussion/Mild Traumatic Brain Injury

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center



U.S. Marine Corps photo by  
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### WHAT IS A TBI?

A traumatic brain injury (or TBI) is a blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain. The severity of the TBI is determined at the time of the injury and may be classified as: mild, moderate or severe. Injuries to the head, neck or face may be associated with TBI.

A mild traumatic brain injury is the most common type of TBI in the military.

### HOW WIDESPREAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Since 2000, more than 370,000 service members have sustained a TBI.<sup>1</sup> Americans sustained more than 2.5 million TBIs in 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>2</sup>

### WHY IS THIS AN ISSUE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS?

Young men between the ages of 18 to 24 are at greatest risk for TBI. Many activities that service members engage in regularly, such as military training and sports or recreational activities, are potentially dangerous and could result in a TBI. Combative training (boxing, karate, and mixed martial arts), riding motorcycles or ATVs, rock climbing, parachuting, and other high-risk activities may make a service member more susceptible to getting a TBI.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Concussion is another word for a mild TBI.
- Concussion results from a head injury that makes you feel dazed, confused and may cause you to briefly lose consciousness. However, most concussions do not cause unconsciousness.
- Symptoms of concussion most often resolve within days or weeks.

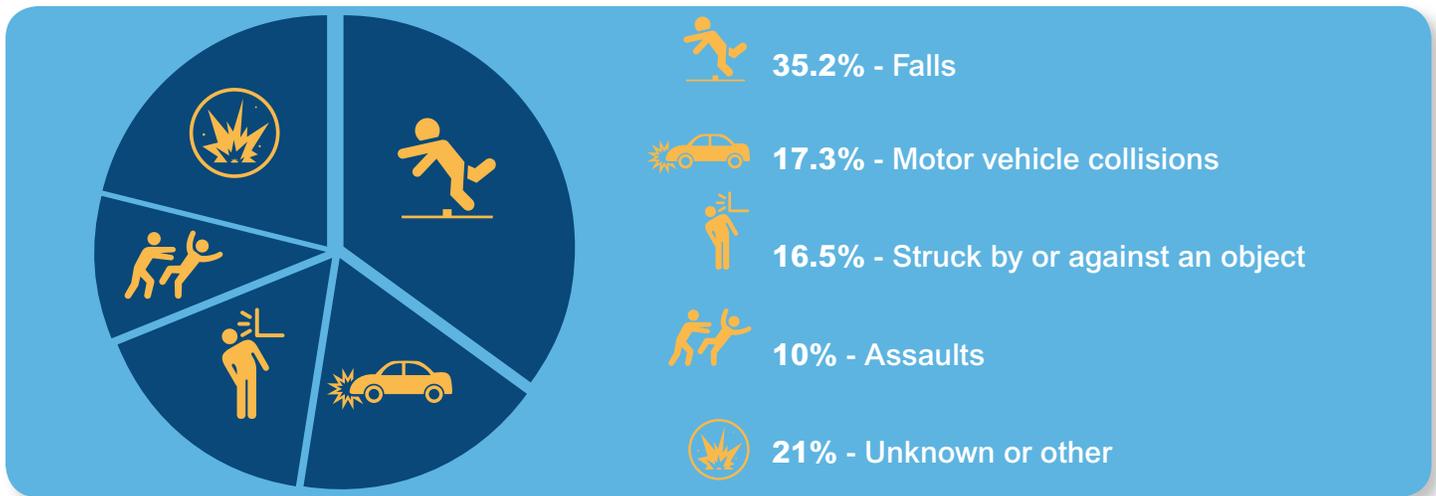
<sup>1</sup> DVBIC (2017). DoD Worldwide Numbers for TBI. DoD TBI Worldwide Numbers since 2000.

Accessed from [dvbic.dcoe.mil/dod-worldwide-numbers-tbi](http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/dod-worldwide-numbers-tbi). Accessed on: 6/12/2017

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from [cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/pdf/bluebook\\_factsheet-a.pdf](http://cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/pdf/bluebook_factsheet-a.pdf)



## LEADING CAUSES OF TBI<sup>2,3</sup>



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO GET CHECKED OUT?

- The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you can get treated and recover. Toughing it out can prolong recovery or lead to persistent problems that could have been avoided.
- Your health care provider can help treat your symptoms and advise you on how to return to your regular activities safely and gradually.
- If you sustain another concussion before you recover from the first, it is more likely that you will have long-term problems.

## Common Symptoms of Mild TBI

### Physical

- Headache
- Sleep disturbances
- Dizziness
- Balance problems
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Fatigue
- Visual disturbances (blurred vision, double vision)
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Ringing in ears

### Cognitive (Thinking)

- Slowed thinking
- Poor concentration
- Memory loss
- Confusion
- Difficulty making decisions
- Difficulty finding words

### Emotional

- Anxiety
- Feeling depressed
- Irritability
- Mood swings

## A HEAD FOR THE FUTURE:

You have the power to reduce the risks that cause TBI by making smart decisions in your day-to-day life. You can THINK AHEAD for your future by doing the following:

- Recognize the causes of TBIs and take steps to prevent them
- Reduce your risks by taking extra precautions and being aware
- Recognize the symptoms of TBI and seek medical help if you experience them
- Talk to your spouse, line leaders and providers when you think you have been injured
- TBIs are treatable and recovery is possible

**A HEAD FOR THE FUTURE**

For information, visit [dvvic.dcoe.mil/aheadforthefuture](http://dvvic.dcoe.mil/aheadforthefuture)

<sup>3</sup>TBI numbers diagnosed at military treatment facilities 2000-2013 for the external causes of injury are for active components only. These numbers do not include repeat TBI encounters in garrison. Percentages have been rounded.

Do you have questions about this fact sheet? Feedback? Email [info@dvvic.org](mailto:info@dvvic.org).

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