



Brain Health for Kids

A PROGRAM OF THE BRAIN INJURY
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Getting Better After Brain Injury

Tips and info for parents

The information provided in this presentation is not a substitute for medical or professional care. Questions about diagnosis and treatment for a brain injury should be directed to your child's doctor or nurse.

Helping your child recover after a brain injury might feel stressful or scary.

- ✓ You're already doing the right thing by learning how to help them during this time.

Recovery is different for each child

For most children, recovery may take days to weeks. For others, recovery may take months or years. That is why a brain injury is considered both a short-term and ongoing (chronic) medical condition.

Doctors and nurses will assess the type and severity of a brain injury to determine whether a child can:



Can recover at home.



Should stay in a hospital and receive specialized care.

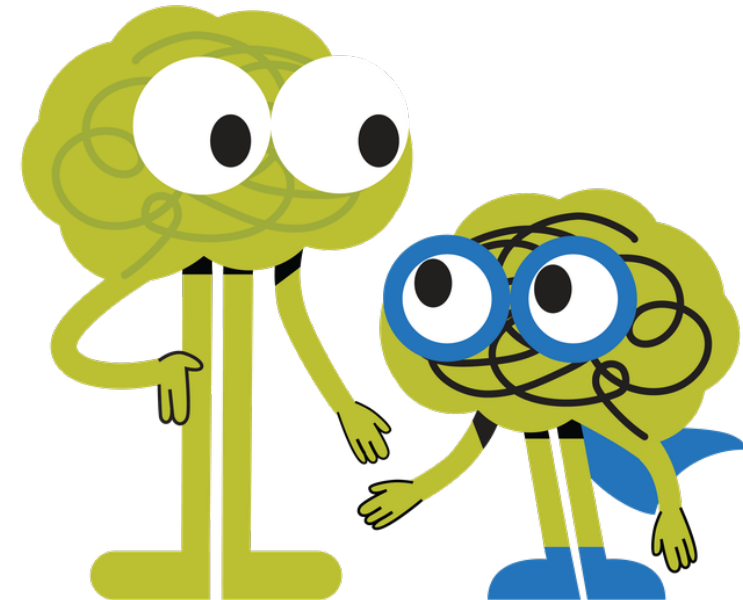
Recovery at home



Most children with a brain injury can recover safely at home after being checked by their doctor or nurse.

What to Expect:

- Symptoms are generally most severe during the first 24 to 48 hours after a brain injury.
- Brain injury symptoms are generally part of the normal healing process.
- It is common for brain injury symptoms to change or reappear during the recovery process.
- Most children will feel better within a couple of weeks and no longer experience symptoms.



Recovery at home



Tips for Parents:

Schedule a follow up appointment with their regular doctor or nurse so that they can check in on your child's recovery.

- Be sure your child avoids activities that put them at risk for another head or brain injury during recovery. Your child's brain is still healing and more vulnerable to the effects of another injury.
- Ask for written instructions on helping your child return to school and sports and their other regular activities that is based on their symptoms.
- If your child's symptoms last for more than 2 to 4 weeks, ask their doctor or nurse about getting a referral to a brain injury specialist to help with their recovery.

Some children may feel sad or frustrated during their recovery.

Keeping them connected with friends and loved ones who can support them through this time can help.



Getting care in a hospital



Your child will likely first receive any needed emergency care and treatments before being admitted to the hospital.

What to Expect:

- Doctors and nurses often do several tests to learn more about the injury and its effects on your child's brain. This may include imaging of the brain using CT scans or MRIs.
- Your child should get their own treatment plan based on their injury and symptoms. This may include medical procedures and medications to help with health problems that show up.
- Some children may recover at home after leaving the hospital while others may need specialized care in other medical settings, such as a rehabilitation facility.

Getting care in a hospital



Tips for Parents:

- Write down questions you have for your child's doctor or nurse so that you have them ready when they are available.
- Set up a plan for updating friends and family about how your child is doing and identify someone who can help you provide these updates.
- Many hospitals have chaplains and social workers who are available to speak with and provide you with some support and understanding.
- Keep copies of your child's medical records and imaging tests (x-rays, MRIs).



Take time for yourself.

Caring for your child after a brain injury can be hard and stressful.

When possible:

- ✓ Try to get enough sleep
- ✓ Eat healthy foods
- ✓ Drink plenty of water to help stay hydrated
- ✓ Take walks and do other physical activities
- ✓ Get outside, nature can be healing
- ✓ Stay connected to others and ask for help when you need it

Trust your instincts

- ✓ You know what's normal for your child and what's not.
- ✓ Monitor your child regularly and watch for changes in how your child acts or feels.
- ✓ If their symptoms or health problems seem to be getting worse, be sure to share this information with their doctor or nurse.



For more tips and info on brain injury

Visit www.biausa.org/KidsBrainHealth

or call the Brain Injury Association
of America at [1-800-444-6443](tel:1-800-444-6443)

