Traumatic Brain Injury Prevention Information for Parents

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HOME

PLAY

SPORTS
Injuries are the leading cause of death in New York State (NYS) for children ages 1 to 19 years.
How many children are injured because of a fall?

• Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits in NYS for children ages 14 and younger, and the second leading cause of injury for children ages 15 to 19.

• Hospitals treat an average of more than 106,000 fall-related injuries in children under 19 each year in NYS.
What is a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?

• A traumatic brain injury, also called a TBI, is a specific type of damage to the brain that disrupts its functioning. Not all blows to the head result in a TBI.
What is a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?

• A TBI can occur when the head:
  – is violently shaken by external force (e.g., a hard hit in football, shaken baby syndrome)
  – hits a stationary object (e.g., hits pavement during a fall from a bike, windshield in a car crash)
  – is hit (e.g., by impact from a ball)
  – is pierced (e.g., gunshot wound)

• The severity of a TBI can range from mild to severe, depending on the extent of the damage to the brain.
TBI Data

• In NYS, 20% of children who are hospitalized for sports-related injuries sustain a TBI.

• Each year in NYS:
  – An average of over 6,000 children ages 19 and younger were treated at a hospital for injuries sustained while using wheeled recreational equipment. 20% of the children who were hospitalized had a TBI.

• In NYS, an average of almost 3,000 children ages 19 and younger were treated each year at a hospital for injuries sustained while either skiing or snowboarding.
  – Over 15% of these children who were hospitalized and over 10% of those seen as outpatients at hospital emergency departments had a TBI.
Signs and Symptoms of a TBI

• The signs and symptoms of a TBI can be either subtle or obvious depending on the severity of the injury.
• Some common signs and symptoms of a TBI include:
  – Headaches or neck pain that do not go away;
  – Difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions;
  – Slowness in thinking, speaking, acting, or reading;
  – Getting lost or easily confused;
  – Feeling tired all of the time, having no energy or motivation;
  – Mood changes (feeling sad or angry for no reason);
  – Changes in sleep patterns (sleeping a lot more or having a hard time sleeping);
  – Light-headedness, dizziness, or loss of balance;
  – Urge to vomit (nausea);
  – Increased sensitivity to lights, sounds, or distractions;
  – Blurred vision or eyes that tire easily;
  – Loss of sense of smell or taste; and
  – Ringing in the ears
Signs and Symptoms of a TBI

• Children with a brain injury can have the same signs and symptoms as adults, but it is often harder for them to let others know how they feel.
• Call your child’s doctor if he/she had a blow to the head and you notice any of these symptoms:
  – Tiredness or listlessness;
  – Irritability or crankiness (will not stop crying or cannot be consoled);
  – Changes in eating (will not eat or nurse);
  – Changes in sleep patterns;
  – Changes in the way the child plays;
  – Changes in performance at school;
  – Lack of interest in favorite toys or activities;
  – Loss of new skills, such as toilet training;
  – Loss of balance or unsteady walking; or
  – Vomiting
Long-Term Consequences of a TBI

• TBI can cause a wide range of functional changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions.

• TBI can also cause epilepsy and increase the risk for conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and other brain disorders that become more prevalent with age.

• Repeated mild TBIs sustained over months or years can result in lasting physical and mental changes. Repeated mild TBIs occurring within a short period of time, such as hours, days, or even weeks, can be fatal.
For More Information

• Brain Injury Association of New York State
  (www.bianys.org)

• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  (www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/tbi_concussion.html)

• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Toolkit”
  (www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/coachestoolkit.html)
Questions?

Contact Us!

Enter your organization’s contact information here.