

Brain Trauma

The phenomenon of traumatic brain injuries and concussions following a head injury or blow to the head is now well known in the field of sports. Unfortunately, this condition is seldom addressed in the context of conjugal violence. A growing trend in Quebec is to link traumatic brain injuries in victims of conjugal violence with episodes of physical abuse (e.g. being hit in the head, strangulation, head held underwater, etc.). We believe that it is important for you to think about this, thus helping you to possibly better understand some of the consequences of the violence you have suffered.

In contrast to people injured in a sporting activity where they received medical aid and support, you probably didn't have the same opportunity. In other words, you may not have had the time needed to take care of yourself, rest and heal slowly from the violence you experienced.

Suffering a brain trauma caused by your partner could have an impact on your health. If this is the case, rest assured that we will be there to support you in your journey to recovery.



Refuge

pour les femmes de l'Ouest de l'île

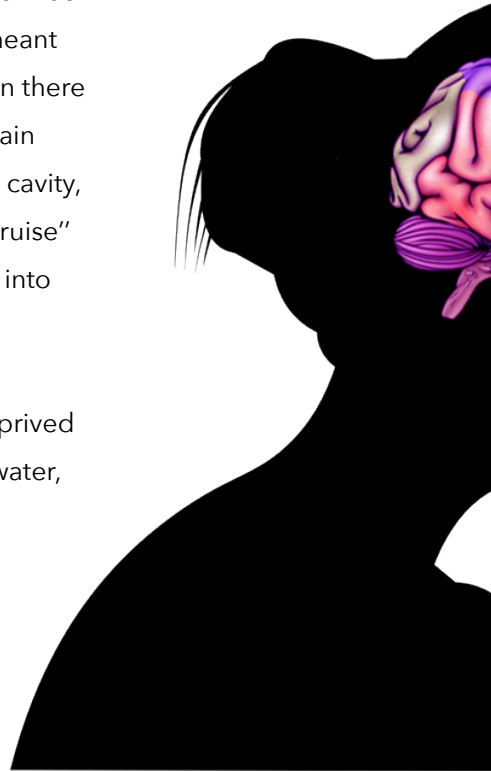
West Island Women's

Shelter

What is a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?

A traumatic brain injury is an injury to the brain caused by a strong blow to the head, face or neck. Our brain is surrounded by a fluid that is meant to protect it from any harm. However, when there is a sudden blow or jolt to the head, the brain moves rapidly back and forth in the cranial cavity, causing a kind of contusion (similar to a “bruise” which appears on our skin when we bump into something).

The brain can also be injured when it is deprived of oxygen. Having your head held underwater, being choked, having your neck pressed against a wall, etc., can result in a loss of oxygen flow to the brain and cause small lesions.



In comparison to a physical injury to the body, injuries to the brain are almost invisible. They are therefore more difficult to detect in the context of conjugal violence. A traumatic brain injury following a violent episode can cause cognitive, psychological, physical, emotional and behavioral changes.

Take a few minutes to read the list below. Do you recognize yourself in any of the following sentences?



- I often experience headaches
- I feel dizzy
- I often feel nauseous
- I am sensitive to bright lights
- It bothers me when there is a lot of noise
- I have trouble reading/writing due to my blurry and/or double vision
- I often have numbness or weakness in my extremities (arms, legs, hands, etc.)
- I don't sleep well; I have trouble falling asleep; or staying asleep
- I have insomnia
- I am easily irritated or impatient
- I feel anxious
- I feel depressed
- I forget (...)
- I often feel confused or in a state of "fog"
- It is difficult for me to concentrate
- I find it hard to make decisions
- It is a struggle for me to learn new things
- I have difficulty understanding or remembering important information
- I have a hard time with completing tasks/chores

At our next meeting, we will have the opportunity to further discuss this topic together and I would encourage you to write down your questions, thoughts, memories, etc. on the last page of this leaflet.

