

What is a brain injury?

An acquired brain injury refers to an injury to the brain that occurs after birth. Brain injury can affect people of all ages and from all walks of life.

How can someone acquire a brain injury?

Acquired brain injury can result from:

- **Traumatic injury** – a blow to the head or when the head is forced to move quickly forward and back. This may happen as a result of assaults, traffic accidents or falls
- **Viral Infections** such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain)
- **Lack of oxygen** to the brain
- **Damage to brain tissue** as a result of a brain tumour or following brain surgery.

Classification of injuries

Brain injuries can be classified into:

- Mild
- Moderate
- Severe.

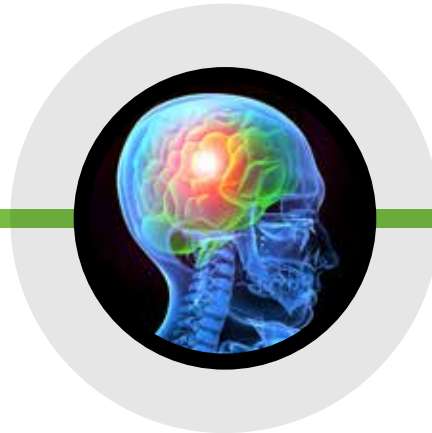
Even mild brain injuries can have significant effects for a person and their family.

For many people brain injury can be a 'hidden disability', hidden from everyone except close family and friends. The Community Brain Injury Team understand how difficult this can be for people and are here to help.

How does brain injury impact on a person?

People may experience common problems such as:

- **Changes in physical and sensory abilities** – loss of taste and smell, balance and mobility problems
- **Cognitive difficulties** – changes in ability to think, learn new things, and problems with concentration and memory
- **Psychological difficulties** – changes in personality and behaviour, increased irritability, anxiety, anger and mood changes
- **Communication difficulties** – changes in speech, word finding difficulties, understanding speech
- **Relationship difficulties** – changes in personality may lead to difficulties in coping with relationships such as those with partners, family, friends or in work or college.



The Community Brain Injury Team (CBIT)

The Community Brain Injury Team is based at the Grove Wellbeing Centre. It is an interdisciplinary team which provides rehabilitation for adults and their carers who have experienced the effects of a brain injury.

The team aims to provide a service in your home and community which will maximise your independence. Team members will spend time helping you and your carers to establish what you need.

Team members will work with you in order to develop a plan identifying your goals and ways of achieving these goals in small manageable steps.

Members of the team are qualified experienced staff from:

- Clinical and Neuropsychology
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Social Work.

Referral criteria

Referral to the team may be made from a medical or professional source demonstrating that:

- The individual has sustained a **non-progressive** acquired brain injury
- Is **over 18** years of age
- Lives within the **Belfast Trust** catchment area
- There is evidence of **cognitive impairment**
- Is able to participate in **goal directed rehabilitation**.

Contact us

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