

CONCUSSIONS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A CONCUSSION IS A BRAIN
INJURY THAT LEADS TO
TEMPORARY LOSS OF THE
NORMAL BRAIN FUNCTION.



WHEN DO SYMPTOMS APPEAR?



Some symptoms appear immediately after sustaining a concussion though other symptoms may show up hours or days afterwards.

Acute (immediate) symptoms include:

- Confusion
- Amnesia – usually for the actual event but may include loss of memory for events immediately before and after.
- May or may not have loss of consciousness

EARLY SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

Headache

Nausea or vomiting

Blurred vision

Lack of awareness of surroundings

Dizziness and Imbalance

Slurred speech

Ringing in the ears



LATER SYMPTOMS



- Mood disturbances, irritability
- Cognitive disturbances
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Sleep disturbances, fatigue



SIGNS OF A CONCUSSION



Any loss of consciousness.

Vacant stare, delayed response to questions.

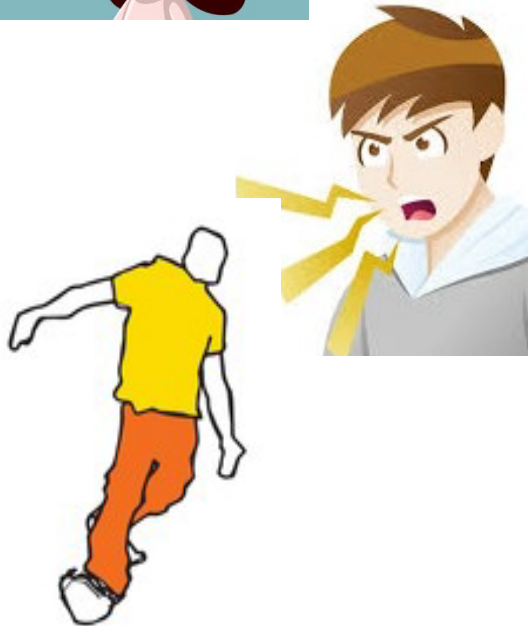
Distractibility, inability to focus. Memory deficits.

Disorientation – walking in the wrong direction.

Emotionally labile – angry, crying for no reason.

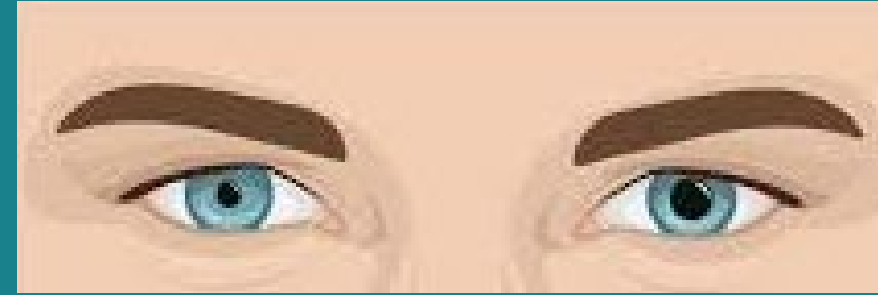
Slurred, incoherent speech.

Incoordination, stumbling, inability to walk in a straight line.



LIFE-THREATENING SIGNS

CALL **911** IMMEDIATELY



One pupil becomes larger than the other.

Excessive drowsiness, inability to awaken.

Worsening slurring of speech.

Severe weakness in muscles.

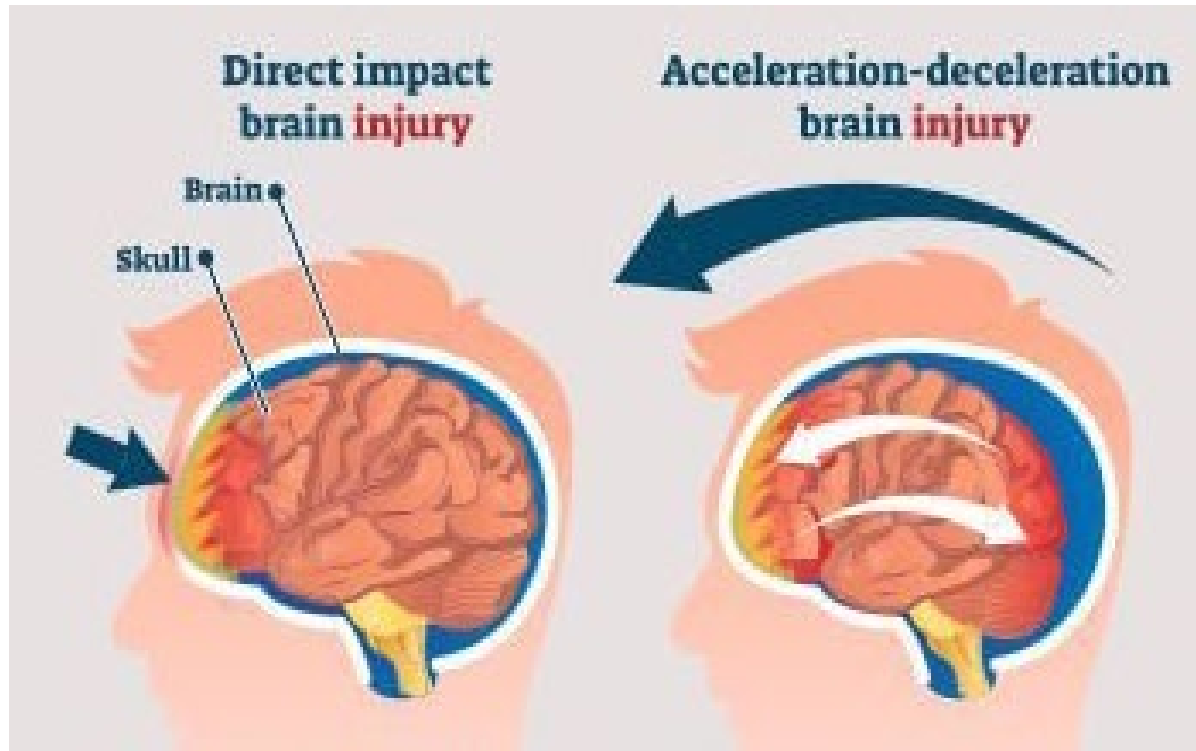
Decreasing coordination.

Repeated vomiting.

Seizures.



WHAT CAUSES A CONCUSSION?



A concussion is caused by trauma to the brain occurring by any of the following events:

- Falling or getting hit while playing sports or other physical activities.
- A violent blow to the head and neck or upper part of the body during a fight or an accident.
- Sudden acceleration or deceleration of head caused by events such as car crash or accident.

HOW SERIOUS ARE CONCUSSIONS?

Concussions, in general, are not life-threatening and most people recover quickly. In some cases, the effects of a concussion can be serious.

A severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) increases the future risk of several neurodegenerative diseases (diseases that affect the brain nerves) including:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Dementia
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)



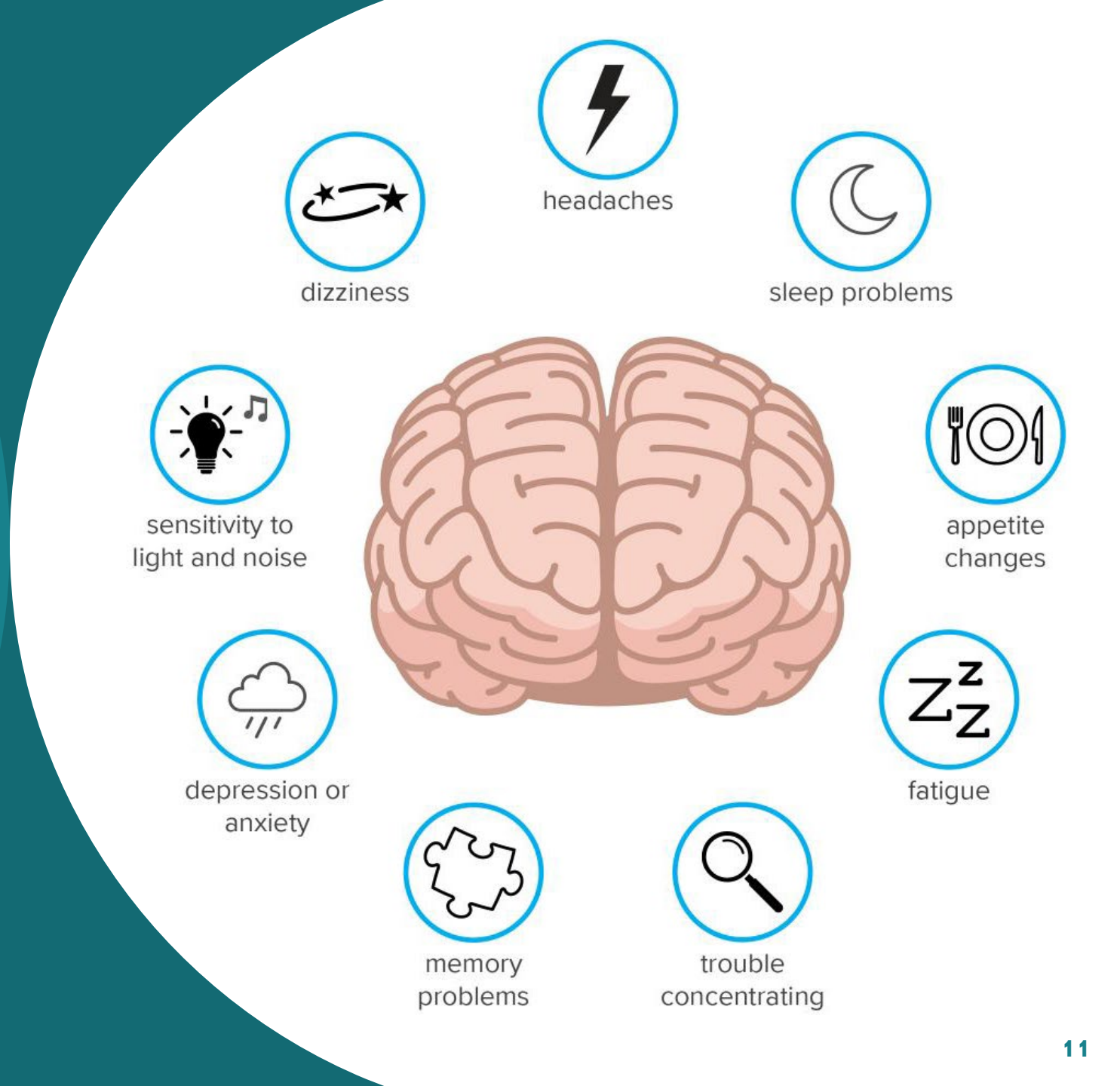
COMPLICATIONS FROM CONCUSSIONS



- **Post-traumatic headaches:** A headache that may last up to 7 days after an injury
- **Post-traumatic vertigo:** Feeling dizzy or spinning of head lasting up to a month
- **Thinking difficulties:** persisting beyond 3 weeks.
- **Second impact syndrome:** experiencing a second concussion before the signs and symptoms of a first concussion have resolved may cause rapid and life-threatening brain swelling.

POST-CONCUSSION SYNDROME

Post-Concussion Syndrome, or PCS, is the persistence of 3 or more concussion symptoms including difficulty thinking, headaches and vertigo lasting longer than the expected recovery period (usually 3 weeks).



CONCUSSION TREATMENT



You cannot diagnose a concussion, but there are things that can be done to help someone recover from a concussion.

If someone sustains a head injury, evaluation by a medical provider is recommended.

After a concussion diagnosis is made, follow any orders from the medical provider and take steps to help with recovery.

TIPS FOR MANAGING A CONCUSSION



The newest guidelines recommend “relative rest” immediately after a concussion and for up to 48 hours after.

- “Relative rest” includes a return to light-intensity physical activity, such as walking, that does not exacerbate symptoms.
- Starting light-intensity physical activity reduces the risk of symptoms persisting longer than a month.

Sleep: sleep patterns may be disturbed after a concussion. Following good sleep hygiene and keeping a consistent sleep schedule is important.



WHAT TO AVOID AFTER A CONCUSSION



To help more quickly recover from a concussion, there are things that should be avoided while recovering. These include:

- Loud music, bright lights
- Reading, writing
- Computer use, video games
- Texting
- Television
- Intense movements - activities that could result in contact and collision
- Strength training



CONCUSSION BASICS



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2024