

## Head Injuries

Maybe you are walking outside and it's raining or there is snow on the ground and you accidentally fall. You are sure that you hit your head on the sidewalk. You feel a little pain where your head hit the ground, but otherwise you feel fine. Nonetheless, you may be at high risk for serious complications if you are on any kind of blood thinner, if you are older in age, or if you have a diagnosis of osteopenia. Anyone with these risk factors should immediately seek medical care as these risk factors could lead to a brain bleed and possible death.

Per Harvard Health Publishing, each year in the United States there are more than 2 million emergency room visits related to head injuries, 72,000 deaths related to head injuries, and an additional 80,000 to 210,000 people with moderate to severe head injuries who became disabled or require extended hospital care.



## Types of Head Injury

Trauma or injuries to your head can cause several types of head and brain injuries and it is important to take any kind of injury seriously. Problems from head injuries include:

**\*Skull Fracture** — A skull fracture is a crack or break in the bones of the skull. Some skull fractures dent inward so that fragments of shattered bone are pressed against the surface of the brain. Most skull fractures cause a bruise (contusion) on the surface of the brain under the fracture.

**\*Epidural Hematoma** — An epidural hematoma is a very serious bleeding of the brain and occurs when one of the blood vessels under the skull is torn during an injury. When the injured vessels bleed, blood collects in the space between the skull and the dura (the outermost of the three membranes that cover the brain). The collection of blood in the brain is called a hematoma—the hematoma can expand within the skull and press on the brain causing death.

**\*Acute Subdural Hematoma** — An acute subdural hematoma can occur when a serious head trauma occurs (i.e., assault, car accident, or fall) causing the blood vessels

and blood to collect between the dura and the surface of the brain. An acute subdural hematoma is a very severe brain injury and is fatal in about 50% of cases. The elderly and people who take blood thinners are especially susceptible to this.

**\*Chronic Subdural Hematoma** — Unlike an acute subdural hematoma, a chronic subdural hematoma occurs gradually because the bleeding in the skull is less dramatic and the hematoma can accumulate in several small separate episodes of bleeding. A chronic subdural hematoma can occur following a minor head injury with symptoms developing gradually over one to six weeks. The most common symptoms of a chronic subdural hematoma include drowsiness, inattentiveness or confusion, headaches, changes in personality, seizures and mild paralysis.

**\*Concussion** — A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) that can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. The sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells.

### Symptoms of Head Injury

Symptoms of a head injury can have a wide range of physical and psychological effects that may appear immediately after the traumatic event while others appear days or weeks later. Some symptoms not commonly known include:

- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping
- Loss of coordination
- A bad taste in the mouth
- Feeling depressed or anxious
- Loss of balance
- Weakness or numbness in fingers and toes
- Changes in ability to smell
- Concentration problems
- Dilation of one or both pupils
- Problems with speech
- Mood changes or mood swings

<https://www.health.com/mind-body/what-to-do-if-you-hit-your-head>

[https://www.health.harvard.edu/a\\_to\\_z/head-injury-in-adults-a-to-z](https://www.health.harvard.edu/a_to_z/head-injury-in-adults-a-to-z)

[https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion\\_what\\_is.html](https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion_what_is.html)

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/traumatic-brain-injury/symptoms-causes>

[https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;\\_](https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images;_)

