



Traumatic Brain Injury and Alcohol Use

After a **traumatic brain injury (TBI)** many people are more sensitive to alcohol. Drinking raises their risk of getting hurt again.

Risks of Alcohol Use for People With TBI

For people with TBI, alcohol can increase the **risk of seizures, worsen mood, and reduce cognitive function.**



If you are having trouble with alcohol abuse, consider calling the **National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Hotline at 800.662.4357.**

Do Not Drink After TBI

- Drinking can **slow down or stop healing** from TBI.
- Not drinking gives the brain the best chance to heal. It can also **reduce the risk of having another TBI and seizures.**
- People's lives often continue to get better for many years after TBI. Not drinking can **raise the chance for improvement.**

Steps to Stop Drinking

- **Find people who support** you in changing your drinking habits.
- **Set a specific goal** and spell out how to meet that goal.
- Find out what people, places, things, or feelings trigger drinking. **Find ways to cope.**
- **Reward yourself** for sticking to your plan and meeting your goals.
- **Have a back-up plan** if your first plan doesn't work.

For someone consuming large amounts of alcohol daily, **withdrawal should be monitored by a doctor** such as in a detox program due to the risk of complications.

Source: Our health information content is based on research evidence and/or professional consensus and has been reviewed and approved by experts from the TBI Model Systems and Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers. The resource has also been reviewed by American Indians with TBI and their family members. **Disclaimer:** This information is not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider regarding specific medical concerns or treatment. The contents of this resource were developed under grants from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant numbers 90DPKT0008 and 90DPKT0009). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this resource do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

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