

Quick Review of Model System Research

Predictors of Follow-up Completeness in Longitudinal Research on Traumatic Brain Injury: Findings from the NIDRR TBI Model Systems Program¹

What is the study about?

This study looked at the type of people with traumatic brain injury (TBI) that are more likely to complete and not complete long-term research study follow-ups. Long-term research studies are important because they help us understand the recovery process for people with TBI.

Who participated in the study?

The study included the records all of the people enrolled in the TBI Model Systems National Database (TBIMS) between the years of 1989 and 2009 who were due to have their first through fifth follow-up. The study included records from 8,249 TBIMS participants.

How was the study conducted?

Researchers looked at records from the TBIMS and organized participants into categories based on how the participants responded to study follow-ups. The researchers organized participants into the following categories: 1) participants who completed all follow-ups; 2) participants who completed some follow-up but also skipped follow-up; 3) participants who completed some follow-up but did not complete the next follow-up(s) without dropping out of the study; 4) participants who dropped out of the study after completing 1 or more follow-ups; 5) participants who dropped out of the study without completing any follow-ups; 6) participants who did not complete any follow-up but did not drop out of the study. Researchers also organized participants by the following characteristics: 1) demographics; 2) medical/psychological social history; 3) injury details; 4) participant status after the injury. The researchers then used statistics tests to link these participant categories with the participant characteristics.

What did the study find?

Participants who had a high level of education, had information about their health insurance coverage in the database, and lived with other people were more likely to complete all follow-ups. Participants with lower levels of education, missing information about health insurance coverage in the database, and participants belonging to racial minority groups were more likely to have skipped some or all follow-ups. In addition, participants who did not need help moving physically were also more likely to skip all or some follow-ups. A better understanding of the people with TBI that do not complete research study follow-ups can help researchers design long-term TBI studies in a way that makes it easier for people to participate and complete follow-ups.

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¹ Krellman, J., Kolakowsky-Hayner, S., Spielman, L., Dijekers, M., Hammond, F., Bogner, J., Hart, T., Cantor, J., & Tsaousides, T. (2013). Predictors of Follow-Up Completeness in Longitudinal Research on Traumatic Brain Injury: Findings from the NIDRR TBI Model Systems Program. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*.