

Why Is Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Hard to Diagnose?

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Video Link: <http://www.brainline.org/content/multimedia.php?id=3261>

Dr. Jane Gillett: Well in Canada, we like to call TBI, we clump it all with acquired brain injury and don't make quite the same differentiation, but in terms of TBI, or traumatic brain injury, the most often times it's misdiagnosed is the mild ones. Most people can recognize when the child's totally in a coma and unresponsive that, hey, maybe there's a brain injury here, whereas the ones who have been injured in a mild brain injury are often not recognized and misdiagnosed. That would probably be particularly true if you were in like a car accident, and you had a mild brain injury, but you fractured your legs and your pelvis and a couple of other things, they're not going to see the mild brain injury. They're going to be concentrating on the other injuries, and it's not often for about a year or two before things have sufficiently gone downhill that somebody says, "Huh, I wonder if they had a brain injury at the time."

So, it's important, because without recognizing that the person's had a brain injury and informing the family, putting in the supports around that are needed, talking to the schools also so the school can modify what they are going to do to interact with the person, the child just loses their ability to stay on top of things and go forward as quickly as they would have, fall a bit behind their peers, and the behaviors start to come up and then that's when I say the wheels come off, people start to think, "Oh." So that's why it's important.