

Prevention and Awareness of Traumatic Brain Injury

Source: Produced by Victoria Tilney McDonough and Brian King

Video Link: <http://www.brainline.org/content/multimedia.php?id=1187>

Dr. Jeffrey Bazarian: Many cases of Traumatic Brain Injury are preventable. We found it, in our medical center in Rochester, about 25% of traumatic brain injuries were due to some sport or recreational injury. So those are opportunities that people wear protective devices like helmets, they can be prevented. Now, when we get someone in the ED who's already had a Traumatic Brain Injury, it's kind of like the horse is out of the barn in terms of talking to them about prevention.

What we really need to be doing as emergency providers is talking to other people who have injuries to other parts of their body, like legs and arms, and reminding them that helmets are a great way to prevent brain injuries, especially when you're riding your bicycle and doing other contact sports. Education is vitally important in preventing that next Traumatic Brain Injury. We do things like that with our parents in the ED, and we have posters up in the waiting room that remind people to wear helmets and seatbelts, since wearing a seatbelt is an excellent way to prevent a Traumatic Brain Injury in a car accident.

Lay media, TV shows, movies, unfortunately kind of trivialize the effects of brain injuries. So you'll see an action character who gets hit in the face, briefly knocked out, gets up and runs down the street to kill the bad guy. Or maybe unconscious for a long period of time, you know, gets up and runs away as if nothing happened. And that's just not the case. Even the most minor, mild Traumatic Brain Injury can have long-lasting effects. And really the term mild is kind of a misnomer, it's probably not the best term to use because people can have symptoms that last six months to even a year. So unfortunately, the media, you know, I think they're just trying to educate, I mean, they're just trying to entertain audiences, and unfortunately trivialize this injury.