

Classification of Brain Injuries

The Glasgow Coma Scale

The Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) is a 15-point tool used by doctors and emergency personnel to assess the initial severity of a brain injury by evaluating a person's ability to follow directions, move their eyes and limbs, and speak coherently. Higher scores indicate less severe injuries. Brain injuries are then classified into one of three categories: mild, moderate, or severe.

Mild Brain Injury

Mild brain injuries may involve a brief loss of consciousness (up to 30 minutes) or none at all, memory loss surrounding the event (up to 24 hours), and altered mental state at the time of injury. GCS score of 13-15. Recovery is likely following a mild brain injury.

Most commonly referred to as a concussion or brain contusion, mild brain injury is the most common type of TBI in the U.S. Symptoms may be delayed, and many individuals do not seek medical attention, increasing the risk of **misdiagnosis**.

Moderate Brain Injury

Moderate brain injury is characterized by loss of consciousness lasting up to 24 hours, memory loss for events before or after the injury (from 1 to 7 days), and neurological signs of brain trauma visible on imaging. GCS score of 9-12. Physical, emotional, and cognitive complications may be long lasting or permanent following a moderate brain injury.

Severe Brain Injury

Severe brain injury involves loss of consciousness or coma lasting 24 hours or more, memory loss for events surrounding the injury (lasting over 7 days), and clear neurological signs of brain trauma on imaging. GCS score of 8 or lower. Permanent physical, emotional, and cognitive impairments are likely.



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