

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Brain Injury Association of MI

800-444-6443 [www.biami.org](http://www.biami.org)

### Suicide Prevention Hotline

800-273-TALK (8255) Veterans press 1

### Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center

800-870-9244 [www.dvbic.org](http://www.dvbic.org)

### Veterans Administration [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

VA Benefits 800-827-1000

Health Care Benefits 877-222-8387

VISN 11: Veterans in Partnership  
(Lower Peninsula) 734-222-4300

VISN 12: VA Great Lakes Health Care System  
(Upper Peninsula) 708-202-8400

### MI Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

517-335-6523 [www.michigan.gov/dmva](http://www.michigan.gov/dmva)

### Joint Veterans Council of Michigan

800-455-5228 [www.michigan.gov/vetbenefits](http://www.michigan.gov/vetbenefits)

### County Veteran Service Counselors

910-592-2862 [www.nacvso.org](http://www.nacvso.org)

### Veteran Service Organizations

American Legion  
313-964-6640 [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)

American Red Cross  
202-303-5834 [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Am Vets  
301-459-9600 [www.amvets.org](http://www.amvets.org)

Catholic War Veterans  
313-471-3896 [www.cwv.org](http://www.cwv.org)

Disabled American Veterans  
313-964-6595 [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)

Jewish War Veterans  
202-265-6280 [www.jwv.org](http://www.jwv.org)

Marine Corps League  
313-964-6830 [www.mcleague.org](http://www.mcleague.org)

Military Order of the Purple Heart  
313-964-6888 [www.purpleheart.org](http://www.purpleheart.org)

Paralyzed Veterans of America  
313-471-3996 [www.michiganpva.org](http://www.michiganpva.org)

Polish Legion of American Veterans  
[www.plav.org](http://www.plav.org)

Veterans of Foreign Wars  
313-964-6510 [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org)

Vietnam Veterans of America  
800-VVA-MICH [www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

### National Guard State Chaplain

517-285-6846

### Wounded Soldier & Family Hotline

800-984-8523

MI Legal Services [www.michiganlegalaid.org](http://www.michiganlegalaid.org)

### MI Protection and Advocacy

800-288-5923 [www.mpas.org](http://www.mpas.org)

### Social Security Disability

800-772-1213 [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

### MI Works!

800-285-9675 [www.michiganworks.org](http://www.michiganworks.org)

MI Resource Center (access to Substance Abuse Coordinating Agencies)

800-626-4636 [www.michiganresourcecenter.org](http://www.michiganresourcecenter.org)

### MI Rehabilitation Services

800-605-6722 [www.michigan.gov/mdcd](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd)

### Disability Network/Michigan

(locate a Center for Independent Living)

888-255-2457 [www.dnmichigan.org](http://www.dnmichigan.org)

### Local/county resources can be found in the phone book:

- Community Mental Health
- Michigan Department of Human Services

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# RESOURCES FOR VETERANS WITH BRAIN INJURY AND THEIR FAMILIES



Michigan Department  
of Community Health

MDCH



MICHIGAN PUBLIC  
HEALTH INSTITUTE



SPONSORED BY:  
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OF MICHIGAN

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**V**eterans returning from combat may have a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), mortars, grenades, bullets, car accidents, mines or falls. Serious injury can occur without obvious physical disabilities. TBI sometimes goes unrecognized until long after the injury.

On behalf of the citizens of Michigan, the Department of Community Health and the Joint Veterans Council of Michigan extend a heartfelt appreciation to you for your honorable service to our country. You served us well and with dignity when you were needed. We want you to know, **“We are here for you NOW.”**

## TBI DEFINED

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/TBI.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/TBI.htm):

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is defined as a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain. Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of such an injury may range from “mild,” i.e., a brief change in mental status or consciousness to “severe,” i.e., an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury. A TBI can result in short or long-term problems with independent function.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF BRAIN INJURY

Just as each individual is unique, so is each brain injury. Physical disabilities, impaired learning and memory loss are common. These impairments may be temporary or permanent. Frequently reported problems include:

### PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

- Headaches or pain
- Stiffness or weakness
- Lack of coordination or balance
- Problems with sleep, fatigue
- Slurred speech/no speech
- Problems with planning movement

- Swallowing/dressing/walking problems
- Seizures
- Bladder/bowel control

### COGNITIVE/SENSORY PROBLEMS

- Slowed thinking
- Memory problems
- Impaired judgment/concentration
- Difficulty learning new information
- Difficulty planning/easily distracted
- Language/communication problems
- Difficulty with reading/writing skills
- Changes in smell/taste/hearing/vision
- Difficulty sequencing
- Decreased problem solving skills
- Loss of personal safety skills

### BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL CHANGES

- Irritability, impatience
- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Restlessness/agitation
- Difficulty reading social cues
- Mood swings
- Depression
- Sexual dysfunction
- Trouble starting/completing tasks
- Inability to cope
- Self-centeredness
- Anger and frustration

### AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services you may be eligible for include:

- Personal assistance/respite care
- Assistive/adaptive equipment
- Home modifications
- Transportation
- Advocacy/legal help
- Drug/alcohol treatment
- Physical/occupational/speech therapy
- Housing
- Financial
- Counseling/support groups

- Education and vocational training
- Family education
- Various grants and scholarships

## HELPING OUR RETURNING TROOPS

It is difficult to return home from an intensive combat environment. It takes a lot of understanding and patience on the home front as our troops adjust back to their previous lives. In many cases, they may never be completely the same. It is even tougher for those who sustained a TBI during their combat tour. It is critical that the family members, close friends and co-workers of troops returning from combat understand and watch for TBI and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. Diagnosis and treatment of TBI should occur as soon as possible after the injury. Find more information about PTSD at [www.ncptsd.va.gov](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov).

## MDCH TBI PROJECT

[www.michigan.gov/tbi](http://www.michigan.gov/tbi)

Educational materials for consumers and providers are available for download from this website. Examples include:

- *Michigan Resource Guide for Persons with Traumatic Brain Injury and their Families* (A **free** printed copy is also available from BIAMI, 800-444-6443.)
- *Resources for Persons with Brain Injury and their Families*
- *Traumatic Brain Injury Provider Training Manual*
- *Access Guidelines to State Services for Persons with Traumatic Brain Injury*

## MDCH ONLINE TBI TRAINING

[www.mitbitraining.org](http://www.mitbitraining.org)

This free, self-paced online training will help viewers better understand TBI and what to do for someone who has sustained a TBI. Professionals may earn continuing education credits. An extensive resource list and glossary are provided.