

WHEN THE ER SAYS “YOU’RE FINE”

A BRAIN INJURY MISDIAGNOSIS GUIDE



Why a normal
CT scan doesn't
always mean
your brain is
uninjured.



EMERGENCY



WHY MISDIAGNOSIS HAPPENS

Many traumatic brain injuries
are invisible.



CT SCANS HAVE LIMITATIONS.

CT scans are designed to detect bleeding, swelling, and skull fractures—not the microscopic damage that occurs in most concussions and mild TBIs.



INVISIBLE INJURIES ARE REAL.

Most brain injuries involve functional changes, chemical imbalances, and **tiny** tears in brain cells—none of which show up on a CT scan.



SYMPTOMS CAN BE DELAYED.

Symptoms may not appear right away. They can develop or worsen hours or even days after the injury.



NORMAL DOES NOT MEAN NO INJURY.

A “normal” scan only means the injury is not visible on that test. It does **NOT** mean your brain is uninjured.



THE BOTTOM LINE:

**A NORMAL
CT SCAN
DOESN'T
RULE OUT A
BRAIN INJURY.**

If you're still
struggling, keep
listening to your body
and seek follow-up
care.

THE REALITY:



HEAD INJURY
Occurs



CT SCAN
Performed



NORMAL RESULT
Received



MISSED INJURY
Still Present

You know your
body best. Keep
advocating for
your health.



THE STATISTICS: BRAIN INJURY MISDIAGNOSIS IS MORE COMMON THAN MOST PEOPLE REALIZE.

Research shows that traumatic brain injuries are frequently missed, minimized, or misdiagnosed in emergency settings.



OVER 50% OF TBIs MAY BE INITIALLY UNRECOGNIZED

Studies suggest that more than half of traumatic brain injuries go unrecognized in emergency departments.



MISDIAGNOSIS RATES MAY REACH UP TO 80% IN CERTAIN POPULATIONS

In some research, misdiagnosis or failure to diagnose mild TBI was found in up to 80% of cases.



ONLY 23% OF CONFIRMED MILD TBI CASES HAD "TBI" DOCUMENTED

An emergency department surveillance study found that only 23% of patients with confirmed mild TBI had "TBI" listed in their medical records.



WHY IT MATTERS

When brain injuries are missed, survivors may not get the treatment, time, and support they need—delaying recovery and increasing the risk of long-term complications.



THE BOTTOM LINE

A normal exam or scan doesn't mean your brain is normal. Trust your symptoms. You know your body best.



If something doesn't feel right, keep looking for answers.
You deserve to be heard. You deserve proper care.



COMMON REASONS PATIENTS ARE MISSED



Brain injuries are complex and not always easy to detect. Here are some of the most common reasons misdiagnosis occurs.



1. NORMAL CT SCAN

CT scans are designed to detect bleeding, swelling, and skull fractures—not the microscopic or functional changes that occur in most concussions and mild TBIs.



2. NO LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Many people with a brain injury never lose consciousness, so the injury is often underestimated or overlooked.



3. MECHANISM OF INJURY

Falls, sports injuries, or low-impact accidents are often not taken as seriously as high-impact car crashes, even though they can cause significant brain injury.



4. SYMPTOMS ARE DELAYED

Symptoms may not appear for hours, days, or even weeks after the injury, leading to a false sense of “I must be fine.”



5. BUSY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

High patient volume and time constraints can lead to rushed evaluations and incomplete assessments.



6. SYMPTOMS MISTAKEN FOR SOMETHING ELSE

Symptoms may be attributed to anxiety, stress, migraines, intoxication, chronic pain, or other conditions.



**A misdiagnosis is not a personal failure—
IT'S A SYSTEM PROBLEM.**

The more aware we are, the more lives we can protect.



SIGNS YOU MAY STILL HAVE A BRAIN INJURY

Symptoms can vary widely from person to person. If you're experiencing any of the following, especially weeks or months after an injury, it's important to seek further evaluation.



HEADACHES / PRESSURE FEELING INSIDE THE HEAD

Persistent or recurring headaches that don't go away.



DIZZINESS OR BALANCE PROBLEMS

Feeling off-balance, unsteady, or experiencing vertigo.



BRAIN FOG / TROUBLE CONCENTRATING

Difficulty thinking clearly, focusing, or staying on task.



MEMORY PROBLEMS

Trouble remembering recent events, conversations, or important details.



SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT OR NOISE

Bright lights or loud sounds may feel overwhelming or painful.



SLEEP CHANGES

Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping more than usual.



MOOD, EMOTIONAL, OR BEHAVIOR CHANGES

Irritability, anxiety, depression, or feeling more emotional than usual.



FATIGUE

Feeling unusually tired, even after rest or minimal activity.



VISION PROBLEMS

Blurred vision, double vision, or trouble tracking moving objects.



TRUST YOUR EXPERIENCE

If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. A normal scan or being told "you're fine" doesn't mean your symptoms aren't real.

YOU KNOW YOUR BODY BEST.



Persistent symptoms deserve answers, validation, and proper care.



**Persistent symptoms deserve evaluation—
EVEN AFTER A NORMAL SCAN.**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU WERE MISDIAGNOSED

Advocating for yourself is critical. You know your body and mind better than anyone. Don't stop seeking answers.

WHAT TO DO:



1. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Keep a detailed record of your symptoms, injury, medical visits, tests, and the advice you were given.



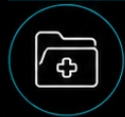
2. SEEK A SECOND OPINION

Consult with a healthcare provider who specializes in brain injuries or concussion care. Don't be afraid to ask for referrals.



3. GET A MORE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Consider advanced testing that looks at brain function, not just structure—such as neurocognitive testing, vestibular assessments, or brain mapping.



4. FOLLOW UP ON YOUR RECOVERY

Track your progress and symptoms over time. Recovery is rarely linear, and ongoing care is essential.



5. YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Connect with support groups, other survivors, and organizations that understand what you're going through.



6. CONSIDER YOUR RIGHTS

If misdiagnosis has impacted your life, learn about your legal options. You may be entitled to support or compensation.



IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER



You deserve to be **heard and believed**. Your symptoms are real.



Early and accurate **diagnosis** can **change your outcome**.



Speak up for yourself and others. Your story could help someone else get the care they need.

Share your experience and help drive change.



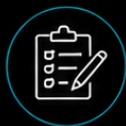
Your health. Your future. Your voice matters.
KEEP ADVOCATING. KEEP PUSHING FOR ANSWERS.



HOW YOU CAN MAKE AN IMPACT

Misdiagnosis is still happening—more often than most people realize. But together, we can change that.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:



SHARE YOUR STORY

Your experience can help us collect critical data, raise awareness, and prevent others from being overlooked.



SPREAD AWARENESS

Talk about brain injury misdiagnosis with your friends, family, and community. Awareness leads to change.



SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Your donations help us fund research, education, and advocacy to improve diagnosis and care for brain injury survivors.



ADVOCATE FOR BETTER CARE

Encourage healthcare providers, hospitals, and policymakers to take brain injuries seriously and use better diagnostic tools.



BE SOMEONE'S VOICE

If you see someone struggling after a concussion or brain injury, speak up. You could be the reason they get the help they need.



**TOGETHER,
WE CAN END
THE SILENCE
AND IMPROVE
THE FUTURE FOR
BRAIN INJURY
SURVIVORS.**

Every story shared.
Every voice heard.
Every action taken.
It all adds up to
real change.



**Your experience can help prevent someone else's.
SHARE. SUPPORT. ADVOCATE. CHANGE LIVES.**



YOU DESERVE ANSWERS. WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

No one should have to fight for a proper diagnosis. You are not alone, and you don't have to navigate this journey alone.



TAKE ACTION TODAY



SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Fill out our misdiagnosis form and help us collect critical data.



HELP DRIVE RESEARCH

Your story can help improve understanding, diagnosis, and care.



RAISE AWARENESS

Speak up, share resources, and help others who may be overlooked.



SUPPORT CHANGE

Together, we can push for better systems and better outcomes.



YOUR VOICE HAS POWER. YOUR STORY CAN SAVE LIVES.

Every experience shared brings us one step closer to a world where no brain injury is missed and every survivor gets the care and support they deserve.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

STRENGTH. RECOVERY. HOPE.