

COMMON CHANGES AND PROBLEMS AFTER BRAIN INJURY

PHYSICAL

Weakness/Paralysis
Impaired coordination/balance
Changes in vision:
-double vision
-blurriness
-visual field cuts
-inattention to one side of space
-trouble tracking/focusing
-altered visual perception
Changes in hearing/Ringing in ears
Difficulty swallowing
Dizziness/Nausea
Headaches, neck &/or back pain
Sensitivity to light/noise
Fatigue / Sleeping more
Trouble falling or staying asleep
Reduced smell or taste
Seizures

EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL

Mood swings
Increased irritability
Depression/withdrawal
Restlessness/agitation
Passivity
Lack of motivation / initiation
Loss of interest in activities
Poor impulse control
Anger outbursts
More easily prone to frustration or overload
Lability (less control of emotions)
Denial and poor awareness of problems/changes
Inappropriate social interaction (swearing, lack of tact, inappropriate eye contact, verbosity, etc.)
Personality changes
Hyper-/Hypo-sexuality
Depression
Egocentricity

COGNITION/COMMUNICATION

Disorientation to person, place, time
Confusion / Impaired memory
Inflexibility
Reduced concentration/attention
Difficulty doing more than one thing at a time
Reduced math skills
Perseveration (getting "stuck" on a certain topic, task, word)
Difficulty staying on task or on topic
Impaired judgement and problem-solving skills
Inconsistent performance
Difficulty with generalization and carry-over of new learning
Sequencing problems and disorganization
Difficulty with abstract thinking and reasoning skills
Slowed thinking/Increased rate of performance
Slurred Speech
Changes in voice quality (nasal, hoarse, breathy, etc.)
Language impairment: may include word-finding problems, difficulty with word order and grammar, decreased auditory comprehension (esp. of abstract material), increased difficulty with reading and writing, which may include slower reading, poor reading comprehension, spelling difficulties, etc.