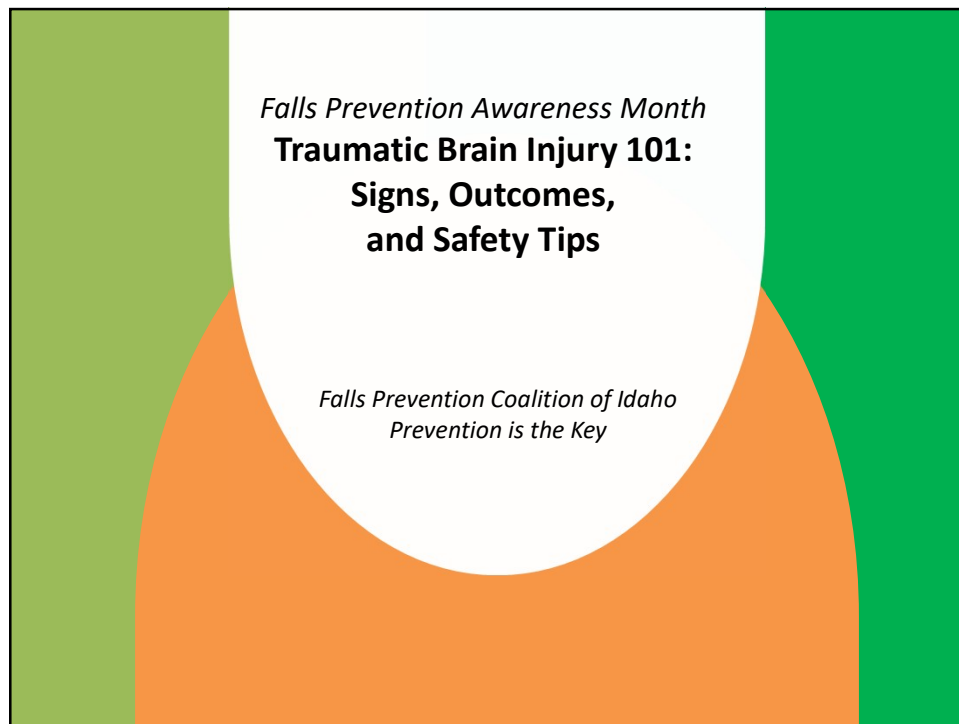




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Seminar Materials

- Slides available on our website
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls
- Recording available on our YouTube Falls Prevention channel
<https://youtube.com/@idahoCOA>

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Got Questions?

- Feel free to ask questions via the Q&A as you think of them
- Our presenter will either answer them at a good time during the seminar or during Q&A at the end

3

Technical Emergency Plan

- If you have audio or video problems, please log out and back in
- If we lose our presenter, the technical team will take over until she can log back in



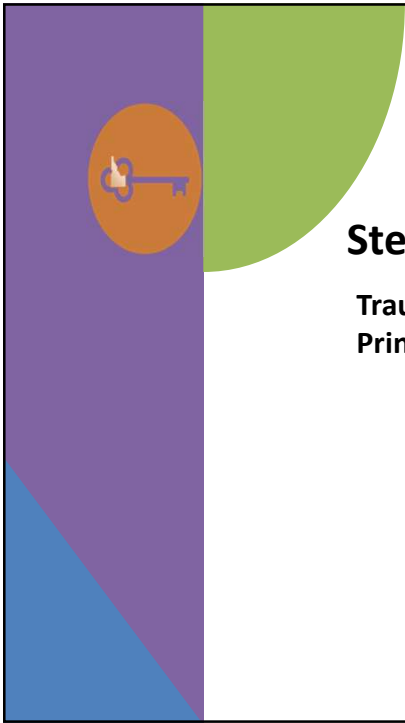
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What We'll Discuss Today

- What is a TBI & common causes
- Common & special risk factors
- Signs & symptoms
- Common outcomes & recovery
- Q&A
- Prevention & getting help



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Stefanie Shadduck, MA

Traumatic Brain Injury Program
Principal Investigator

Institute of Rural Health

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 Idaho State University

What is a TBI?

TBI Definition

An injury to the brain caused by an **external physical force**, such as:

Blow

Bump

Fall

Penetrating Object

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What is a TBI?

Mild

Loss of consciousness

- < 30 minutes
- Concussions

Moderate

Loss of consciousness

- 30 minutes to 24 hours

Severe

Loss of consciousness

- > 24 hours
- Coma

False: You do not have to lose consciousness to have a TBI.

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Common Causes

Falls

The leading cause of TBI, especially for older adults.

Accidents

Car crashes and traffic incidents.

Impacts

Being struck by or bumping into an object.

Everyday Risks

Tripping over rugs, missing a step, or slipping on ice.

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Why does it matter?

Major Impact

TBI is a major cause of disability and mortality.

Age 75+ Risk

Adults aged 75 and older have the highest rates of TBI-related hospitalization and death in the US.

Rising Falls

Falls are the most common trauma injury and are steadily increasing every year.

Fatal Falls

Falls are the leading cause of trauma-related death.

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Why does it matter?

43% of adults 50+ have sustained a head or neck injury in their lifetime

- 30% have had a possible or probable TBI.
- Only 2% report a diagnosed TBI.

Older adults 50+ more likely to experience ongoing BI-related symptoms

- Increase falls risk.
- Contribute to challenges for participation in falls prevention.

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Risk Factors for Falls

Biological & Medical

- Females
- Previous head injury
- Chronic health conditions
- Multiple medications

Physical & Sensory

- Reduced strength & balance
- Balance & gait disorders
- Vision & hearing impairment
- Limitations in daily living activities (ADLs)

Behavioral & Home

- Cognitive impairment (e.g., Alzheimer's & related dementias)
- Depression & social isolation
- Environmental hazards (poor lighting, loose rugs, clutter, pets)

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Case Study 1

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Special Risks to Keep in Mind

Blood Thinners

Aspirin
Coumadin
Eliquis
Plavix

The “Slow” Bleed

In older brains, veins stretch and can bleed very slowly after a minor bump.

Brain Shrinkage

As we age, the brain shrinks slightly, this means the brain can move around more during an impact.

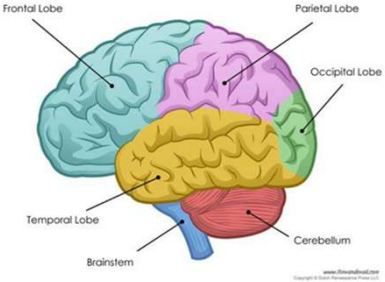
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Your Brain is Your Supercomputer



Frontal Lobe Decisions & self-control	Temporal Lobe Memory & hearing
Parietal Lobe Touch & temperature	Occipital Lobe Vision
Cerebellum Balance & movement	Brain Stem Communicates between the brain & body



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Signs and Symptoms to Watch For

Physical Headaches, dizziness, nausea, or feeling off-balance. 	Sensory Blurry vision, ringing in the ears, or sensitivity to light/sound. 	Cognitive Confusion, memory gaps, trouble concentrating, or slowed thinking. 	Emotional Unusual irritability, sadness, or sudden mood changes. 
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Note: Symptoms can appear immediately or days/weeks after the injury.



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Common Outcomes and Recovery

Short-Term
Temporary fatigue, sleep disruptions, and brain fog.

Long-Term
Potential changes in memory, balance, or emotional health.

The Good News
Most people recover well with proper rest and medical guidance.

Warning: Always seek professional medical evaluation after any significant head impact.

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When to Call 911 or Go to the ER

▲ A headache that keeps getting worse

▲ Repeated vomiting or continuous nausea

▲ One pupil (the black part of the eye) being larger than the other

▲ Slurred speech, numbness, or decreased coordination

▲ Increasing confusion, restlessness, or inability to wake up

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Prevention: Everyday Activities

Buckle Up

Always wear a seatbelt in the car.



Gear Up

Wear a helmet when riding a bike or doing active sports.



Light It Up

Keep living spaces well-lit to avoid bumping into objects.



Checkup

Get regular eye exams to keep your vision sharp.



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Case Study 2

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Prevention: Preventing Falls at Home

Clear the Path

Remove tripping hazards like throw rugs, clutter, and loose cords.

Add Support

Install grab bars in the bathroom and railings on all stairways.

Stay Steady

Wear sturdy, non-slip shoes both indoors and outdoors.

Exercise

Focus on leg strength and balance exercises (like Tai Chi or simple stretches).

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How to Talk to a Doctor

Bring your Medication List

Prescriptions
Over-the-counter
Herbal supplements

Establish a Timeline

Be ready to tell the doctor exactly when the bump or fall happened, even if it was weeks ago.

Track your Symptoms

Headaches
Dizziness
Sleep issues
Brain fog
Forgetfulness
Irritability
Anxiousness
Sadness

Bring Someone

Bring someone to the appointment to help take notes and describe any behavioral changes you might not notice yourself.

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Summary

Be Aware

Recognize the signs and never ignore a head injury.

Be Proactive

Small changes at home drastically reduce fall risks.

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What Questions Do You Have?

- Enter questions into the Q&A
- We will pose questions to Stefanie, as many as time allows

Stefanie's contact info:

tbi@isu.edu

208-373-1769

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Thank you for Your support

Participants	Presenter	Techie
We hope you understand what a TBI is & strategies to prevent them	Our expert's insights, knowledge & experience are irreplaceable!	We can't do any of it without our behind-the-scenes ZOOMbie!

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We hope you continue to be falls-free in ID!

Next seminar: Thu Sept. 10th
Strategies to Eat and Drink Properly to Prevent Falls (2 PM MDT/1 PM PDT)
Register now www.aging.idaho.gov/falls

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