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Traumatic brain injury: What it is, what it isn't and what can be done about it

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is highly prevalent. Certain populations appear to be more at risk, even if the functional consequences are similar. Outcomes from a TBI will be dependent on severity. Though even after a mild TBI, while good outcomes can be expected for the majority, there are still many for whom symptoms are persistent and problematic. Indeed, one of the challenges of a TBI is that recovery is typically variable and often incomplete. Gaining an understanding of what relates to and is predictive of good vs. poor outcome is important. Equally important is taking this information and identifying targets of opportunity for optimizing outcome.

Biography

Theresa D Hernandez, Ph.D. has been studying traumatic brain injury (TBI) using basic and clinical neuroscience models since 1985. Her ongoing, extramurally funded research program assesses the degree to which recovery and functional outcome after TBI can be optimized in a variety of populations (Veterans, civilians, athletes). This includes conducting randomized, placebo-controlled, blinded trials of novel interventions, such as acupuncture. This work is accomplished through her appointment as Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience at CU Boulder, her appointment as a Senior Investigator and Research Psychologist in the Eastern Colorado Healthcare System, Rocky Mountain MIRECC (Mental Illness, Research, Education & Clinical Center) and through her role as one of the co-Directors of the PAPRR (Promoting Athlete Performance, Recovery and Resilience) Board at CU Boulder. She is also the Director of the CAIRR (Clinical Assessment of Injury, Recovery and Resilience) Neuroscience Laboratory.

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