

ABI: About Brain Injury

-- prepared by Sask. North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Sleeping Problems After ABI

ABI Services
...serving
individuals with
acquired brain
injury, their
families and
their
communities



The importance of sleep

During sleep, your brain and body recharge. Your muscles rest. Your brain sets down memories and refreshes some of its connections that allow it to function.

Sleep problems after brain injury

Sleep disturbances are one of the most common symptoms following a brain injury. Not getting good, regular sleep can impact your whole world. In fact, studies and surveys have shown that sleep disorders are three times more common in people with brain injury than that of the general population and that nearly 60 percent of people with TBI experience long-term difficulties with sleep. Women are more likely to be affected than men, and issues with sleep are more likely to develop as a person gets older.

Side effects of not sleeping well:

- Deepening depression and anxiety
- A drop in one's sense of well being
- Lack of energy
- Increased irritability
- Higher incidence of traffic or workplace accidents
- Increased fatigue

What causes sleep problems?

Sleep is a complex process that involves many parts of the brain, so a person with a brain injury may experience all sorts of different problems, including insomnia, narcolepsy, excessive daytime sleepiness, and mixed-up sleep patterns. What can cause these issues?

- Medications
- Changes in breathing control
- Physical and chemical changes
- Pain
- Depression
- Alcohol and drug use
- Caffeine and nicotine
- Daytime napping
- Physical inactivity

Reference: www.BrainLine.org

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Past editions of the **About Brain Injury** newsletter are available on-line at www.paphr.sk.ca in the "Healthy Living" section.

Strategies to Improve Sleep

1. Get into a good sleep routine

- Go to bed only when you feel sleepy at night-time.
- Try to get to sleep at about the same time every day.
- No matter how poor your sleep at night, get up at the same time every day - use an alarm clock.
- Don't oversleep because of a poor night's sleep.

2. Sleep only at night time

- Sleep during the day will affect your sleep at night so try to avoid naps during the day.
- Early on after an injury, people may find they need to have day-time rest or sleep to manage fatigue, but try to keep the naps short and don't nap after mid afternoon
- If you get tired try to just have a rest on the couch. Don't rest on your bed.

3. Wind down before bedtime

- Don't watch exciting movies just before bedtime.
- Listen to some relaxing music
- Start preparing for bed at least 30 minutes before bed e.g. lock the house, have a shower, put on pyjamas, brush your teeth, turn down the lights.
- Try a warm drink – e.g. milk.

4. Spend time in bed *sleeping*

- Don't do other activities in bed e.g. reading, watching television, or eating.
- Keep the bed only for sleeping.

If you are awake for a long time:

- Get out of bed.
- Do an activity until you are sleepy (make sure it is something boring).
- Go back to bed – repeat above if needed.

5. Caffeine

- Avoid caffeine after lunch as this may affect your sleep at night-time.
- Caffeine is in coffee, tea, chocolate or cola drinks so be sure to cut down on all of them.
- Try decaffeinated tea or coffee as an alternative

6. Alcohol, drugs, and medication

- Avoid drinking alcohol, especially at night time. Alcohol changes the kind of sleep you have, and can make sleep restless.
- If you smoke cigarettes, nicotine levels may also affect your sleep so try to cut down.
- Some prescription and recreational drugs can change your sleep patterns, so ask for information from your Pharmacist or GP.
- Over the counter medications (e.g. pseudoephedrine) can also

7. Exercise

- Get some gentle, regular exercise because this will help with your sleep.
- Don't overdo it if you haven't been getting exercise for a while. Start slowly.
- Talk to your doctor or a Physiotherapist about the kind of exercise you can do.
- Avoid exercising at least four hours before bed-time.

8. Time outside

- Spend some time in the sunshine during the day, because this may help with your sleep patterns e.g. sit outside with a book or magazine or the newspaper (remember sunscreen and a hat).
- Go for a short walk
- Do an activity outside in the fresh air e.g. gardening, walking the dog



9. Sleep Environment

- Make your bedroom and bed as comfortable and pleasant as possible.
- Remove clutter
- Get rid of any noise or distractions e.g. use ear-plugs to cut down on noise.
- Use curtains to block out light and noise and dim the lights.
- Make sure your pillow and bed are comfortable.
- Make sure the bedroom is the right temperature for the weather.
- Essential oils like lavender also can be relaxing, so a couple of drops in your bath water, or on your pillow may help create a relaxing feeling.

10. Be patient

- It can take time to re-settle sleep patterns so don't expect changes to happen over-night.
- Keep using the new ideas and you should start to see changes gradually.
- If you need further advice, talk to your GP or a Psychologist.

Reference: ©The State of Queensland (Queensland Health) 2011 Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service
PO Box 6053 Buranda 4102
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/abios/>

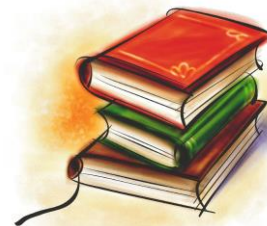
ABI Services Library

We also have a large collection of reference books, activity guides, and easy to read books available for survivors, family members & professionals to borrow.

We have an online searchable list of all the resources in our collection.

Check out: www.librarything.com/catalog/ABIServices

To borrow resources from this collection, contact: **Lisa Chambers** phone 306-765-6629
email: lchambers@paphr.sk.ca



Additional resources are also available on the provincial website at <http://www.abipartnership.sk.ca/index.cfm>

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Who We Are

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services is a group of programs that assist individuals, families and communities affected by an acquired brain injury

We are a part of the Acquired Brain Injury Partnership Project that is managed by Sask Health and funded by Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI).

Our programs include:

- Sask North ABI Outreach Team
- Sask North Independent Living Program
- Sask North Education and Prevention Program

Who We Can Help

To qualify for services clients must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have a diagnosis of moderate to severe acquired brain injury supported by medical records and be medically stable.
- Be a resident of Saskatchewan or eligible for Saskatchewan Health coverage.
- Are open to working cooperatively on goal-directed rehabilitation with ABI and other service providers.
- Community agencies, caregivers, employers, families and schools who require resources and support are eligible as well.

**Individuals are prioritized for services based on time since injury with priority given to those whose injury occurred in the past (3) years.

**Individuals who have a congenital brain injury or one that is a result of a progressive condition will not be considered.

What We Do

Sask North ABI Outreach Team

- Case management: helping develop client-driven goals, coordinating health services, providing referrals and planning a return to work or school.
- Consultation: Providing information to others regarding specific client care.
- Brain injury education
- Adult & children's camps

Sask North Independent Living Program

- Activities of daily living: helping individuals become more independent through short-term interventions.
- Assistance to find housing.
- Therapeutic recreation and Leisure services.
- Vocational: exploring work or volunteer opportunities.

Sask North Education and Prevention Program

- Prevention Activities: Prevent Alcohol & Risk-related Trauma in Youth (PARTY) Program, No Regrets Program, Brain Walk, safety resource kits, ATV, snowmobile & traffic safety, bike safety, child car seat clinics and fall prevention.
- Mild brain injury education.



Our mission is to provide individual and family support to people with ABI so that they may live successfully in their communities with improved quality of life.



Sask. North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

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Coffee Talk

Join us for a morning of good conversation, sharing, learning, and lots of laughs.

- **Mondays** (except for stat holidays)
- **10:30 – noon**
- **South Hill Mall – Community Room**
behind Easy Home – East Mall Entrance)



*Drop in for all or portion of this weekly group.
Free program. Refreshments served*

If lack of transportation is preventing you from attending, please contact Nicole at 765-6480 for assistance.

Introduction to ABI

Online Series

Available online at www.abipartnership.sk.ca

Designed to provide basic level knowledge about the effects of brain injury and strategies to help recovery.

Many other resources also available on this website.

ABI Drop-In Program

Join us for an afternoon of cards, games and fun

- Wednesdays
- 1:30 to 3:30pm
- **Minto Bowl & Rec Centre (lounge area)**
210 – 13th Street East, Prince Albert

*Coffee will be supplied.
The program is free.*

If lack of transportation is preventing you from attending, please contact Nicole at 765-6480 for assistance.

Local Brain Injury Support Groups

Tisdale – Contact: Shelley (306) 873-5420 or Andrea (306) 873-5617

Prince Albert – Contact: Glenda James 1-877-373-1555

