

9 Types of Brain Injuries You Can Suffer in a Crash

What Texas Drivers Need to Know About Crash-Related Brain Trauma

A sudden crash can change your life forever. When another driver's negligence causes a violent collision, one of the most devastating outcomes is a [brain injury](#). Even a seemingly minor bump to the head can trigger lasting complications, while severe trauma can lead to permanent disabilities, personality changes, or reduced independence.

At [Smith & Hassler](#), we've seen how brain injuries affect not just victims but their entire families. If you suffered a head injury in a [Houston car accident](#), [truck crash](#), or [motorcycle wreck](#), our attorneys can fight for the compensation you deserve to cover medical expenses, lost wages, and the lifelong care these injuries often require.

Here are 9 common types of brain injuries you can suffer in a crash, what they mean for your recovery, and why acting quickly to protect your legal rights is critical.

1. Concussion

[Concussions](#) are one of the most frequent brain injuries after a car accident. They happen when the brain is jolted inside the skull, often from rapid acceleration or impact. Symptoms may include headaches, dizziness, confusion, nausea, and memory problems.

Even "mild" concussions can lead to post-concussion syndrome, where symptoms linger for months or even years. After any crash, prompt evaluation from a neurologist is essential to rule out more severe damage and document your condition for your injury claim.

2. Diffuse Axonal Injury (DAI)

A diffuse axonal injury occurs when rotational forces during a crash cause nerve fibers in the brain to tear. High-speed rollovers and truck collisions are especially dangerous because they generate violent motion.

Victims often lose consciousness immediately, and recovery can involve prolonged hospitalization and rehabilitation. DAIs frequently result in lasting cognitive deficits, reduced motor function, and emotional changes, making full compensation critical to secure long-term care.

3. Brain Bruise (Contusion)

A brain contusion is a bruise on the brain tissue caused by direct impact. In car accidents, this often happens when the head strikes the steering wheel, window, or dashboard.

Contusions can cause swelling inside the skull, which increases intracranial pressure and poses life-threatening risks. In severe cases, surgery may be required to relieve pressure and prevent permanent brain damage.

4. Brain Hemorrhage (Bleeding in the Brain)

A brain hemorrhage occurs when trauma from a crash causes blood vessels in the brain to rupture, leading to dangerous bleeding inside the skull. This isn't a single condition but rather a term that covers several forms of bleeding, including intracerebral hemorrhage, subdural hematoma, epidural hematoma, and subarachnoid hemorrhage.

Even a relatively small amount of bleeding can put life-threatening pressure on the brain due to the confined space inside the skull. Symptoms often include severe headaches, dizziness, nausea, vision problems, slurred speech, confusion, and sudden loss of consciousness.

Immediate medical treatment is critical. Depending on the type and extent of bleeding, doctors may perform emergency surgery to remove pooled blood, reduce swelling, and repair damaged blood vessels. Left untreated, brain hemorrhages can lead to permanent brain damage, coma, or death.

For crash victims, identifying a brain hemorrhage quickly is key to survival and recovery. CT scans, MRIs, and other imaging tools are often used in the ER to detect internal bleeding, which can worsen rapidly in the hours following a traumatic impact.

5. Skull Fracture

Skull fractures happen when an external force cracks or shatters the skull bone. In crashes involving SUVs, trucks, or motorcycles, these injuries are common because of violent blunt-force trauma.

Complications often include [brain bleeding](#), cerebrospinal fluid leaks, and increased vulnerability to infections. Victims may require reconstructive surgery, ongoing monitoring, and long-term rehabilitation.

6. Penetrating Brain Injury

Penetrating brain injuries occur when a foreign object pierces the skull and enters brain tissue. In car and truck crashes, this can happen when debris, shattered glass, or metal fragments are propelled into the head.

These injuries are medical emergencies and often result in permanent impairment. Long-term effects may include motor dysfunction, speech difficulties, and severe memory loss, making comprehensive compensation vital for recovery.

7. Closed Head Injury

A closed head injury happens when there's significant trauma to the head without any external penetration. Despite the absence of visible wounds, these injuries can be just as dangerous as penetrating trauma.

The brain can still swell, bleed, or suffer extensive tissue damage within the skull. Without proper imaging, these injuries are sometimes overlooked, which is why immediate CT scans or MRIs are crucial after a crash.

8. Coup and Contrecoup Injury

A coup-contrecoup injury occurs when the brain is injured on both sides — at the initial point of impact (coup) and on the opposite side as it rebounds (contrecoup).

These injuries are common in high-speed rear-end and [head-on collisions](#) where the brain violently slams against the inside of the skull. Symptoms may include severe headaches, cognitive impairment, and loss of coordination. Recovery can involve months of therapy and ongoing medical care.

9. Hypoxic or Anoxic Brain Injury

A hypoxic or anoxic brain injury occurs when the brain is deprived of oxygen for a period of time. Hypoxia refers to a partial lack of oxygen, while anoxia means a complete absence. In serious auto accidents, these injuries can happen when victims experience severe blood loss, crushed airways, cardiac arrest, or become trapped in vehicles without oxygen.

Although they aren't caused by direct head trauma, hypoxic and anoxic injuries can be just as devastating. Brain cells begin to die within minutes without adequate oxygen, leading to lasting cognitive, physical, and emotional challenges. Victims often require extensive medical care and rehabilitation, and in severe cases, may face permanent disabilities. Because the costs can be overwhelming, pursuing full compensation is critical when these injuries occur after a crash.

Why Acting Quickly Protects Your Rights

After any suspected brain injury, fast medical care isn't just critical for your health. It's also essential for your legal case. Trucking companies, insurers, and defense attorneys move quickly to limit their liability after a crash. While you focus on your recovery, their investigators are gathering evidence to protect their bottom line.

An experienced Houston brain injury lawyer can:

- Secure and preserve black box data, driver logs, and accident scene photos.
- Work with neurologists and specialists to fully document your injuries.
- Build a strong case supported by expert testimony.
- Demand maximum compensation for your medical costs, lost wages, and future care needs.

Talk to a Houston Brain Injury Lawyer Today

If you or a loved one suffered a brain injury in a car accident, truck crash, or motorcycle wreck, Smith & Hassler is here to help. Our attorneys have recovered **over \$1 billion** for injured Texans, and we're ready to fight for you.

Give us a call or [contact us online today](#) for a free, confidential consultation. We proudly represent clients in Houston, Harris County, and throughout the state of Texas.