

Aivovammaliitto



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The traumatic brain injury association of Finland



**The Traumatic Brain Injury Association of Finland is a national organisation that provides support for people living with traumatic brain injury and for their families.**



The purpose of the Association is to improve the social position of disabled persons and to influence the care and rehabilitation services as well as the development of service systems.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs when an external force traumatically injures the brain. The most common causes of injury are falls, traffic and work accidents, sports-related injuries, leisure time accidents and assaults. Each year, more than 5 000 people sustain TBI, and the number of people sustaining reduced brain injury is estimated between 2 000 and 3 000 people. Traumatic brain injury is the leading immediate cause of death among men under the age of 45.

Annually, between 15 000 and 20 000 Finns sustain some degree of brain injury, around 20 % of which is serious. Among them, 60 % are men and 40 % women, and half of the injured people are between 15 and 34 years of age. TBI is estimated to affect approximately 100 000 Finns. TBI can cause a host of physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural effects. The symptoms of brain injury include, for example, abnormal fatigue, memory disorders, loss of initiative, slowness in activity and thought, emotional disturbances and difficulties in behaviour control, and various physical symptoms.

#### REHABILITATION

People with traumatic brain injury need long-term rehabilitation provided by experienced professionals familiar with brain injuries. Rehabilitation has to be carried out in cooperation with the injured person, their family and a multi-professional team. The goal of rehabilitation is to increase the injured person's awareness of the symptoms and to support the improvement of their functional capacity. The relatives of those with TBI also need support and guidance. The main form of medical rehabilitation is neuropsychological rehabilitation. Other types of rehabilitation are occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy and rehabilitative nursing. In addition to this, TBI requires the contribution of medical specialists, rehabilitation counselling and social work services. Rehabilitation can take place in an outpatient or inpatient setting and may be needed for several years.

Adaptation courses help the injured person and their family and friends find the resources to cope with the new life situation and create connections to other people in a similar situation. Vocational rehabilitation helps to assess the person's ability to work. It may be necessary to rethink one's career choice or consider a job change. Vocational rehabilitation may include training and coaching as well as a variety of support measures to help cope at work. The injured person needs services that simplify the daily performance and allow a meaningful life content.

**The Traumatic Brain Injury Association of Finland provides various services:**

**People living with TBI need services that make their everyday life easier and improve their ability to live a meaningful life.**

#### VOLUNTARY WORK

The Traumatic Brain Injury Association of Finland arranges various types of voluntary activity for people living with traumatic brain injury and for their families. Voluntary work comprises peer support, peer support group counselling, training and different tasks at local associations.



- Information and advice
- Adaptation courses
- Peer support
- Different types of voluntary activity
- Advocacy

