

ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (ABI)

ABI is damage to the brain that was not present at birth. ABI can result in cognitive, physical, emotional, or behavioural impairments that lead to permanent or temporary changes in functioning.

There are two categories of ABI – NON-TRAUMATIC and TRAUMATIC:

Non-traumatic brain injuries occur as a result of damage to the brain caused by internal factors, such as a lack of oxygen, exposure to toxins or pressure. Below are some of the more common types of non-traumatic brain injury:

- Stroke
- Brain Aneurysm
- Brain Tumours
- Hypoxia
- Bacterial/Viral Infections:
 - Encephalitis – inflammation of the brain.
 - Meningitis – inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and/or spinal cord.

Traumatic brain injuries

Traumatic brain injuries occur because of a specific event that results in a violent impact to the head. These events include:

- Road traffic collisions
- Assaults
- Falls
- Workplace accidents
- Sports injuries (concussions)

Some forms of acquired brain injury, such as a stroke tend to cause localised damage to the brain. Others, meningitis for example, in most cases causes widespread brain damage. The impact of acquired brain injury can vary dramatically from person to person and the part of the brain effected may be different in each individual case.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is a chronic condition with 'hidden' disabilities and life-long consequences.

Improvements in acute care have substantially reduced the mortality rate but survivors are often left with a considerable burden of physical, cognitive, academic and psychosocial effects.