



# MENTAL HEALTH AND BRAIN INJURY

**Brain injury and mental health are often treated as two entirely unrelated health topics. We know now that mental health and brain injury are very connected and overlap in a variety of ways.**

**34% of those who suffer a mild TBI and 49% of those who suffer a Severe or Moderate TBI will have a mental health diagnosis after their injury.**

**Sometimes individuals who have had a brain injury will struggle with mental health after their injury. Research indicates that people who have experienced a brain injury are more at risk for developing depression, anxiety and other related conditions. While the exact reasons are still not clear, it is believed to be related to the chemical injury of the brain or the trauma of the injury.**

## WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AFTER BRAIN INJURY

### **1 Seek Informed Care**

Not all doctors who treat brain injury are mental health experts and vice versa. To ensure that you get the care you need, be honest with your healthcare providers about all of your challenges. Reach out to Brain Injury Association of Ohio's Helpline to be connected to providers that are sensitive to the needs of brain injury survivors.

### **2 Connect with Other People.**

Relationships are important for your wellbeing and help you to feel that you are not alone. Take time to socialize with your friends and family. Reach out to other survivors that may have experienced a similar situation. Brain Injury Association of Ohio can help connect you to a local support group to connect with other survivors and caregivers.

### **3 Stay Active**

Physical activity has many well-established mental health benefits. Physical activity is not only good for your brain health but also reduces the risk of anxiety and depression, and improves sleep and overall quality of life. Although not a cure-all, increasing physical activity directly contributes to improved mental health and better overall health and well-being.

### **4 Stay Curious**

Learning has been shown in research to help improve and maintain our well-being. It can boost self-confidence and self-esteem, help build a sense of purpose, and foster connection with others. People engaged in learning report feeling better about themselves and a greater ability to cope with stress, as well as feeling more self confidence, hope and purpose.