

Long-Lasting Mental Fatigue After Traumatic Brain Injury – A Major Problem Most Often Neglected Diagnostic Criteria, Assessment, Relation to Emotional and Cognitive Problems, Cellular Background, and Aspects on Treatment

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1. Introduction

Fatigue after traumatic brain injury (TBI) is common, but often overlooked. But for people fighting their fatigue after brain injury day after day, fatigue is a major problem. This post-injury mental fatigue is characterized by limited energy reserves to accomplish ordinary daily activities. Persons who have not experienced this extreme exhaustion which may appear suddenly, and without previous warning during mental activity, do not understand the problem. This is especially difficult to understand as the fatigue may appear even after seemingly trivial mental activities which, for uninjured persons, are regarded as relaxing and pleasant, as reading a book or having a conversation with friends. A normal, well-functioning, brain performs mental activities simultaneously throughout the day, but after a brain injury, it takes greater energy levels to deal with cognitive and emotional situations.