# Diagnosing & Treating Brain Injury

It's called the "invisible injury" for a reason: brain injury is notoriously difficult to diagnose and treat. Because the brain is our most complex organ, there are a variety of tools that medical professionals can use to measure the effects of a brain injury on a person's body, thoughts, and life.

In the early stages of brain injury, diagnosis centers on any physical abnormality following a traumatic event.

**How diagnosis and treatment are related**

The diagnosis of brain injury involves (CAT scans) looking for signs of brain injury, either through scanning devices like computer assisted tomography (CAT scans), magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs), and X-rays, or through screening tools — usually in the form of simple tests — that measure various areas of a person's speech, movement, memory, and thought. The people most qualified to diagnose a brain injury are emergency room doctors, neurologists, and neuropsychologists.

Often the tests used to diagnose an injury help determine the appropriate course of treatment. Right after a moderate to severe injury, treatment usually focuses on medicines and surgical procedures. Once a person has been stabilized, treatment may focus more on the recovery of any lost abilities or learning to do things in a new way.

**Brain injury treatment**

Brain injury treatment is a complex field of medical rehabilitation. When someone has a moderate to severe injury, treatment can involve the combined efforts of neurologists, psychiatrists, physiatrists, an array of rehabilitation therapists, case managers, and social workers, along with a person's network of friends and family.

For mild traumatic brain injuries, treatment often involves resting the body and the brain. If symptoms of brain injury persist, further evaluation by a neurologist and/or a neuropsychologist may be helpful.