

BRAIN INJURY FACT SHEET

- TBI is the “an alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force.” This force could be the result of the head, neck, or face being hit by or against an object; the forces generated from a blast or explosion; or rapid acceleration or deceleration. [1]
- Prevalence rates of possible brain injuries in women survivors of IPV range from 19 to 100% depending on sample characteristics. [2]
- No two brain injuries are alike. The experience of brain injury depends on a combination of factors unique to each person (e.g., biology, environment, other existing health conditions)
- Brain injury can affect thinking, physical functioning, communication, feeling, and a survivor’s sense of identity. [3]
- Brain injury can cause changes in someone’s ability to reason and make decisions, express themselves, or understand others. [4]
- Brain injury can contribute to the development of mental health issues, or make existing mental health issues worse. [5]
- Because brain injury causes changes in personality or behaviour, survivors can appear difficult to manage.
- Because IPV is a pattern of behaviour that happens over a period of time, women are at risk of sustaining multiple brain injuries during their relationship with a violent partner. [6]
- One study showed that in 99 women with a history of IPV, 74% sustained at least one TBI as a result of violence and 51% reported sustaining multiple TBIs. [7]
- The result of repeated brain injuries is exponential – the more you get the worse it gets
- It is thought that repeated concussions can put people at risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease, or similar neurodegenerative diseases
- IPV survivors, like athletes, are at risk for multiple head traumas and repeated concussions
- Just because you have a history of TBI does not necessarily mean lasting effects, many people can have full recovery
- Strangulation is one of the most dangerous forms of IPV, increasing the risk of death in following assaults by 748%. [8]
- Up to 90% of IPV incidents involve head injury or strangulation. [6]
- Some victims with no visible signs of injury can die from an underlying brain injury up to several weeks after being strangled. [9]

References:

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