

[Successful Aging of Individuals with Brain Injury](#)

Environmental and lifestyle factors – including history of a brain injury – play an important role in successful aging. More research is needed to identify the modifiable environmental and lifestyle factors that are unique to long-term survivors of brain injury. We've built upon 10 concepts identified by the Alzheimer's Association to promote successful aging in persons with brain injury. [Read more](#).

[Chronic Pain After Brain Injury](#)

A recent study in the Journal of Head Trauma and Rehabilitation found that chronic pain affects approximately 60 percent of traumatic brain injury (TBI) survivors, with some respondents reporting chronic pain up to 30 years post-injury. The researchers concluded that chronic pain should be assessed and treated along with other neurocognitive and neurobehavioral disorders, and the findings indicate that the presence of chronic pain after TBI is "far from benign." [Read more about the study's findings here](#).

[35 Years with the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in July 1990, prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. This landmark legislation provides benefits to all Americans living with disabilities, including those with brain injuries. [Learn more about the ADA here](#).

[From screening to success stories: Importance of early detection of brain injury | UnitedHealthcare Community & State](#)

Brain injury (BI) is more prevalent than commonly recognized and frequently goes undiagnosed. Traumatic mechanisms include blows to the head and nontraumatic mechanisms include internal events such as stroke, aneurysm, brain tumor and loss of oxygen to the brain.¹ Individuals served by Medicaid, especially those facing behavioral health challenges, legal involvement, substance use recovery or housing instability, are at increased risk for a BI, as these circumstances heighten the likelihood of sustaining an injury that could result in BI. An estimated 60% of people involved with the criminal legal system have experienced a BI, seven times the rate of the general population.² Due to the complexity of BI symptoms and the varying needs of patients, it is imperative that individuals with BIs obtain early screening and that providers are trained to recognize BI-related challenges. [Read full article](#)

1. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/traumatic-brain-injury/symptoms-causes/syc-20378557>
2. <https://www.nashia.org/>

Spotlight: NASHIA Achievements



That's a wrap on our "Summits for Solutions in Eastern Iowa - DeWitt and Fort Madison" training series - and we're celebrating our incredible team!

Over four powerful sessions, Maria Crowley, NASHIA Director of Professional Development, and Kelly Miller, NASHIA Senior Manager for Technical Assistance, led child welfare professionals through essential training on brain injury awareness, screening, and support strategies.

From understanding the high rates of brain injury in the child welfare system to learning how to build stronger case plans for adults with positive screens, this series was all about turning knowledge into action. For continued support, participants learned about connecting individuals to the Brain Injury Association of Iowa.

Monica Goedken, Violence Prevention Coordinator from the Maternal and Reproductive Health Section of Iowa's DHHS, also provided a session on how to speak with families about brain injury.

Thank you to Jim Pender and Iowa HHS for sponsoring this series of customized sessions on the basics of brain injury and the connections within child welfare as well as the impact on the parents and guardians. This project was supported in part by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

If you are interested in customized training sessions or events for your organization or state, please reach out to info@nashia.org.

Gov. Reynolds signed bill SF 615 into law

Last month, Gov. Reynolds signed [Senate File 615](#) into law. SF 615 is a bill for an act relating to work requirements for the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan, public assistance programs, an Information Technology Fund, the Public Assistance Modernization Fund, and the Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities Program, and including effective date provisions.

Gov. Reynolds released the following statement after signing Senate File 615: “It is a priority of mine to ensure our government programs reflect a culture of work,” Gov. Reynolds said. “If you are an able-bodied adult who can work, you should work. We need to return Medicaid back to its intended purpose—to provide coverage to the people who truly need it.”

Focusing on a Healthy Summer

A healthy lifestyle is good for all of us but especially if you have a brain injury. There are many areas to focus on that can help your overall health and symptoms.

Healthy Eating

What you fuel your body with helps with staying healthy and promotes brain health. The mediterranean diet has shown to be a good plan to follow. This diet includes fish, lean meats, nuts and eggs. Including healthy fats and oils and eating healthy carbohydrates found in vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Cutting down on sugar and eliminating alcohol helps maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Drinking Water

Water and being hydrated is key to good health. It helps your brain and organs to function well. The recommendation for water intake is to drink ½ to 1 ounce of water for every pound you weigh. If you do not drink enough water, you can become dehydrated and this can cause health issues from headaches to lightheadedness. Also limiting your caffeine intake helps prevent dehydration.

Exercise

Exercise is shown to help everyone be healthier. The exercise you do should be geared toward your own capacity. The goal is to get 150 min of moderate aerobic activity or 75 min of vigorous activity per week or combination of both. But the activity should be modified to what you are physically able to do. Anything is better than nothing. Strength training is also important for improving strength and helps prevent injury.

Sleep

Getting enough sleep is very important to supporting a healthy lifestyle. Practice good sleep hygiene. Keep a routine, sleep in a cool environment, avoid screen time before bed, don't take longer than 20-minute naps and avoid caffeine or alcohol in the afternoon and evening.

Mental health

Another important area to health is your social, spiritual and mental health. Take time to focus on things that work on taking care of you. Some examples are relaxation techniques, yoga, spending time with family and friends, seeing a counselor if needed and getting time outside is shown to help improve your mood.

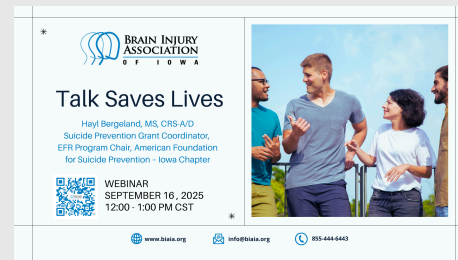
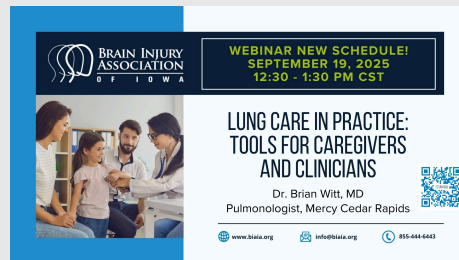
Have a happy and healthy summer!

written by Lisa Jenison, BSW, BIAIA Neuro Resource Facilitator

Webinars

FREE CEU opportunities available for these webinars!

Visit our [webinar page](#) to learn more and register.



We want to hear from you! Your responses will help us design effective training and support tools for disability, aging and behavioral health providers working with individuals impacted by brain injury.

[Start survey.](#)



We are working on improving our website to better serve survivors, caregivers, and professionals. Your feedback will help us make sure the resources you need are easy to find, accessible, and meaningful.

Please take a few minutes to complete our [website feedback survey](#) and let us know what's working - and what could be better. Thank you!



Educational Topics Survey

What topics related to brain injury would you like to see in upcoming webinars hosted by the Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa? Your feedback is valued and appreciated!

[Participate in the survey.](#)



[Call for Webinar Proposals](#)

The Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa is looking for presenters to deliver webinars on topics related to brain injury treatment, rehabilitation, recovery, and support. Presentations can target professionals or survivors and their loved ones.

[Submit proposal](#)

Brain Injury Resource Facilitation



Brain Injury Resource Facilitators are available to serve Iowans; to answer questions and connect those with a brain injury to resources and information. [Learn more about this program](#). BIAIA is one call away.

[BIAIA Satisfaction Survey](#)



Our mission at the Brain Injury Association of Iowa is to create a better future through brain injury prevention, advocacy, education, research and support. Join us on our platforms to obtain the latest and most relevant information pertaining to brain injury.