

Sidebar 1: Classification of TBI Severity (If a patient meets criteria in more than one category of severity, the higher severity level is assigned)			
Criteria	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Structural imaging	Normal	Normal or abnormal	Normal or abnormal
Loss of Consciousness (LOC)	0-30 min	>30 min and <24 hours	>24 hours
Alteration of consciousness/ mental state (AOC)*	up to 24 hours	>24 hours; severity based on other criteria	
Posttraumatic amnesia (PTA)	0-1 day	>1 and <7 days	>7 days
Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) (best available score in first 24 hours)**	13-15	9-12	<9

*Alteration of mental status must be immediately related to the trauma to the head. Typical symptoms would be: looking and feeling dazed and uncertain of what is happening, confusion, difficulty thinking clearly or responding appropriately to mental status questions, and being unable to describe events immediately before or after the trauma event.

**In April 2015, the DoD released a memorandum recommending against the use of GCS scores to diagnose TBI. See the memorandum for additional information.¹

Sidebar 2: Indicators for Immediate Referral	
1. Progressively declining level of consciousness	7. Double vision
2. Progressively declining neurological exam	8. Worsening headache
3. Pupillary asymmetry	9. Cannot recognize people or disoriented to place
4. Seizures	10. Slurred speech
5. Repeated vomiting	11. Unusual behavior
6. Neurological deficit: motor or sensory	

Sidebar 3: Possible Post-mTBI Related Symptoms***		
Physical Symptoms: Headache, dizziness, balance disorders, nausea, fatigue, sleep disturbance, blurred vision, sensitivity to light, hearing difficulties/loss, tinnitus, sensitivity to noise, seizure, transient neurological abnormalities, numbness, tingling	Cognitive Symptoms: Problems with attention, concentration, memory, speed of processing, judgment, executive control	Behavior/Emotional Symptoms: Depression, anxiety, agitation, irritability, impulsivity, aggression

***Symptoms that may develop within 30 days post injury.

Sidebar 4: Symptom Attributes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duration, onset, and location of symptom ▪ Previous episodes, treatment and response ▪ Patient perception of symptom ▪ Impact on functioning ▪ Factors that exacerbate or alleviate symptoms

¹ Department of Defense Instruction. DoD policy guidance for management of mild traumatic brain injury/concussion in the deployed setting. 6490.11: Department of Defense; September 18, 2012. Updated April 2015.