

# Understanding Brain Trauma in Law Enforcement

Law enforcement officers face higher risks of brain trauma from altercations, falls, and crashes. Even head impacts that do not cause a diagnosed concussion can add up over time and affect your health, mood, and job performance.

## Common Brain Injury Symptoms to Recognize

### Physical:

headaches, dizziness, balance problems, light/noise sensitivity, fatigue, sleep changes

### Cognitive:

memory lapses, slowed thinking, trouble concentrating

### Mental Health/Behavioral:

anxiety, depression, panic attacks, anger, mood swings, aggression, poor impulse control, alcohol/substance misuse, hypervigilance, paranoia, suicidal thoughts

## Take Action

**Do not ignore the symptoms.** If they interfere with work or home life, take them seriously and log your symptoms to help guide next steps.

**Get evaluated.** Find a medical professional who understands brain trauma.

**Confidential support is available.**

## Brain Injury Facts for Law Enforcement

### Brain trauma accumulates:

Repeated “bell rung” moments, bumps, blows, or blast exposures can increase the risk of long-term brain changes and complications.

### Causes on the job:

This includes physical altercations, falls, motor vehicle crashes, hard breaking, blast or breacher work, firearms instruction, strangulation incidents, specialty unit training, exposure to domestic violence, and military service. Playing high-contact sports earlier in life also increases risk.

### Overlap with other conditions:

Symptoms can often look like PTSD, depression, or substance misuse, and often co-occur with or worsen these conditions, which makes head trauma easy to overlook.



### [The Concussion & CTE Foundation HelpLine](#)

can connect you with resources, peer support, and providers who understand brain trauma.

**Scan the QR code to complete the confidential form and get connected.**



**COPLINE** is a free, confidential, 24/7 hotline for law enforcement officers. Call 1-800-267-5463 to speak with a trained retired officer.



**CONCUSSION & CTE**  
FOUNDATION

— IN COLLABORATION WITH —

