

# BRAIN INJURY IN COLORADO

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## Brain injury is a serious public health problem in Colorado and the United States.

This brief examines brain injury in Colorado. MINDSOURCE Brain Injury Network at the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment and the Colorado Department of Education are partners in providing data, services and supports for individuals with brain injury and their families/caregivers.

## WHAT IS ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY?

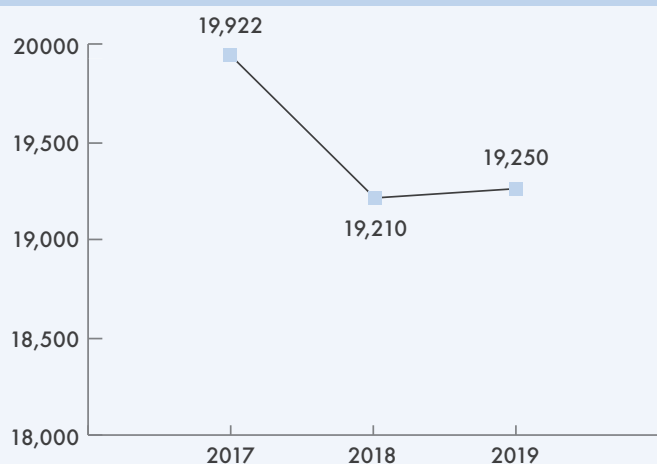
“Brain Injury” refers to damage to the brain from an internal or external source, including a traumatic brain injury (TBI), that occurs post-birth and is non-congenital, non-degenerative, and non-hereditary, resulting in partial or total functional impairment in one or more areas, including but not limited to attention, memory, reasoning, problem solving, speed of processing, decision-making, learning, perception, sensory impairment, language processing, motor and physical functioning, or psychosocial behavior (source: MINDSOURCE).



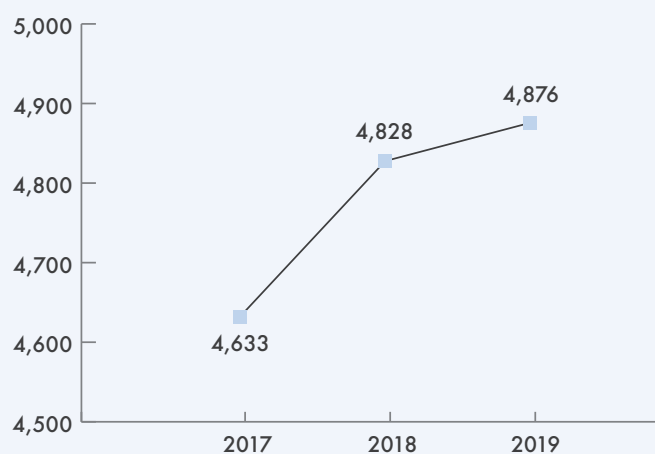
## HERE IS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT TBIs

Emergency department visits related to traumatic brain injuries have decreased in Colorado from 2017 to 2019. Hospitalizations related to traumatic brain injuries increased from 2017 to 2019.

**Total TBI-related ED Visits, Colorado**  
2017–2019



**Total TBI-related Hospitalizations, Colorado**  
2017–2019





From 2017 to 2020  
**4.4%**

of all injury-related  
emergency department  
visits and

**18.1%**

of all injury-related  
hospitalizations



**were TBI-related.**

The overall rate of TBI-related emergency department visits during these years is **325.8 per 100,000 people**, and the overall rate of TBI-related hospitalizations is **83.3 per 100,000 people**.<sup>1</sup>

**Preventing injuries will prevent TBIs.**

	<b>Rates of TBI-related ED Visits</b> (per 100,000 people)	<b>Rates of TBI-related Hospitalizations</b> (per 100,000 people)
Children (0-14 years)	268.4	20.9
Youth/Young Adults (15-24 years)	481.5	58.2
Adults (25-64 years)	266.5	68.0
Adults (65+ years)	393.4	242.4

Youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years showed the highest rate of TBI-related emergency department visits from 2017 to 2020. Adults 65 years and older showed the highest rate of TBI-related hospitalizations.

The counties with the largest numbers of TBI-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations are also highly populated counties: Denver, El Paso, Arapahoe, Adams, and Jefferson counties.

The top mechanisms of injury can inform prevention of traumatic brain injuries. Falls, motor vehicle crashes, and being unintentionally struck by or against an object or person (such as in sports) accounted for 84.4% of all TBI-related emergency department visits and 75.7% of all TBI-related hospitalizations.

<sup>1</sup>These are crude rates, using the total number of TBIs divided by the population. These rates do not take into account the age distribution of the population.

## COLORADO'S INFRASTRUCTURE OF SUPPORTS:

- **MINDSOURCE** - Brain Injury Network is a program within the Colorado Department of Human Services. It administers funds for services, research, and community projects related to enhancing the quality of life for everyone in Colorado living with, or affected by brain injury, and their communities. More information: [mindsourcencolorado.org](http://mindsourcencolorado.org)
- **Colorado Department of Education** provides training and support to school districts, helping them to better serve children and youth with brain injuries. [cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi](http://cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi) For more information: [cde.state.co.us/cdesped/brainsteps](http://cde.state.co.us/cdesped/brainsteps) and here: [cokidswithbraininjury.com](http://cokidswithbraininjury.com)
- **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment** collects data about injuries, including traumatic brain injuries. More information on prevention and data: [cdphe.colorado.gov/health/prevention-and-wellness/injury-prevention](http://cdphe.colorado.gov/health/prevention-and-wellness/injury-prevention)
- **Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing** oversees many programs including the Brain Injury Medicaid Waiver. More information: [hcpf.colorado.gov/brain-injury-waiver-bi](http://hcpf.colorado.gov/brain-injury-waiver-bi)
- **Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado** provides free community-based services for individuals with brain injuries of all ages anywhere in the state. More information: [biacolorado.org](http://biacolorado.org)