

Concussion and CTE

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain.

There has been a lot of media attention on the prevalence of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) among professional athletes and those who have sustained repeated concussions. According to current research, people are in danger of developing CTE if they have sustained repeated concussions. Some people who sustain concussions experience symptoms that last longer than expected. This is known as post-concussive syndrome (PCS) and has some of the same symptoms as CTE. The following explains some of the similarities and differences between CTE and PCS.

Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE)	Post -Concussion Syndrome (PCS)
<p>What Is CTE? CTE has been known for decades to occur in boxers. More recent brain research has been able to identify more specifically how the brain seems to be affected as a result of multiple concussions over time. The research is still very much ongoing.</p>	<p>What Is PCS? PCS is the set of symptoms from a concussion or a series of concussions that do not resolve within the anticipated time frame.</p>
<p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irritability, mood swings, depression, anxiety and problems with memory, impulse control, and judgment.• It is important to understand these symptoms can be associated with other issues besides CTE. A person who is having these issues does not necessarily have CTE.	<p>Symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention, memory, problem solving, depression, anxiety, irritability, impulsivity and mood swings.• These symptoms may vary in frequency and intensity and are often worse after physical exertion, or when the person becomes “cognitively overloaded.”
<p>When Does CTE Present?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTE is currently only officially diagnosed post mortem through an autopsy.• There is no known test to diagnose someone with CTE.• Symptoms typically present years after concussions have occurred.	<p>When Does PCS Present?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A person who sustains a concussion and their symptoms do not resolve after 3- 6 months, are usually diagnosed with post-concussion syndrome.• These symptoms can present at different times and at different levels of intensity.
<p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treatment is normally focused on lessening the impact of the symptoms on day-to-day functioning and includes therapies and medication.	<p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some symptoms can be managed through effective compensatory strategies.• Others symptoms may be managed through therapies or medications.