

Children with brain injuries nearly twice as likely to suffer from depression

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In a study presented Oct. 25 at the American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference and Exhibition in Orlando, researchers found that compared to other children, 15 percent of those with brain injuries or concussions were diagnosed as depressed—a 4.9 fold increase in the odds of diagnosed depression.

Adults with head injuries are known to be at high risk for [depression](#), and yet little research had been done on the topic related to children. In the abstract, "Depression in Children Diagnosed with Brain Injury or Concussion," presented Oct. 25 at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in Orlando, researchers sought to identify the prevalence of depression in children with brain injuries, including concussions, in the U.S.

Using data from the 2007 National Survey of Children's Health, researchers identified more than 2,000 children with brain injuries, reflecting the national child [brain injury](#) rate of 1.9 percent in 2007; and 3,112 children with diagnosed depression, mirroring the 3.7 percent national child depression rate that year. Compared to other children, 15 percent of those with brain injuries or concussions were diagnosed as depressed—a 4.9 fold increase in the odds of diagnosed depression.

"After adjustment for known predictors of depression in children like family structure, developmental delay and poor physical health, depression remained two times more likely in children with brain injury or [concussion](#)," said study author Matthew C. Wylie, MD, author of the

abstract, "Depression in Children Diagnosed with Brain Injury or Concussion."

The study, the largest to look at an association between brain injury and depression in children and adolescents, "may enable better prognostication for brain-injured [children](#) and facilitate identification of those at high risk of depression," said Dr. Wylie.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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