



LIFE HEALTH

More to concussion relief than dark rooms



By Melissa Carr, Special to 24 hours
Thursday, July 24, 2014 5:40:15 PDT AM



Concussions in relation to football players has been a hot topic in the world of sports. (REUTERS)

Former B.C. Lions receiver Arland Bruce recently filed a lawsuit alleging negligence related to concussions he incurred during play. Concussions are a common occurrence in sport — the NFL has already paid out \$765 million to its players because of this issue. So, what is a concussion and how can it be treated?

Concussions are traumatic brain injuries caused by a fall, a hit to the head, or any injury that jars or shakes the brain inside the skull. Recovery can take hours to weeks or more, particularly when they are repeated or severe. Symptoms include headaches, blurred vision, dizziness, sensitivity to light or noise, fatigue, issues with thinking and remembering, personality changes, and problems with sleeping too much or too little.

While most of the concussions we see here will occur because of a sporting mishap or car accident, many soldiers have received these traumatic brain injuries from improvised explosive devices (homemade bombs). All departments of the U.S. military have been using acupuncture to treat these injuries, and they are training physicians how to perform the therapy. This particular form of

acupuncture involves small needles applied to the ears and left in place for several days. The treatment is called “battlefield acupuncture,” and the protocol was created for the ease and speed of delivery — just five needles in each ear, taking only a few minutes — but with positive effects lasting from hours at the start to years as treatments progress.

Local registered acupuncture professionals are likely to offer a more personalized and thorough treatment addressing individual needs. Herbs, supplements, and dietary recommendations may be included. A 2011 study done by the U.S. Department of Defence and conducted by 11 experts in neurobiology, psychology, and nutrition. They found that extreme trauma to the brain sends it into a hypermetabolic state, leaving it needing more energy, more quickly. The study recommends giving foods high in protein right after the injury and for two weeks following. Because appetite might be affected, small and frequent meals may be more suited over three large meals daily. High-quality fish oils, red grapes, turmeric, ginger, and other anti-inflammatory foods can also be helpful.

Of course, the best solution would be concussion prevention, but since accidents do happen, it is good to know that there are treatment options.

Dr. Melissa Carr practices traditional Chinese medicine in Vancouver.

T-Rex Hates Chaturanga
Crazy Dog TShirts

Reader's comments »

If you already have an account on this newspaper, you can login to the newspaper to add your comments.

By adding a comment on the site, you accept our terms and conditions and our netiquette rules.

0 Comments

Vancouver 24 hrs

 Login ▾

Sort by Best ▾

Share  Favorite 



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

 [Subscribe](#)

 [Add Disqus to your site](#)