

A promotional banner for a 'Times & Word Bracket Challenge'. On the left is a basketball. The main text reads 'TIMES & WORD BRACKET CHALLENGE' in large, bold letters. Below this, it says 'CLICK HERE TO PLAY FOR FREE! PRIZES FOR 1ST, 2ND & 3RD PLACE' and provides the URL 'contest.timesnewspapers.com'. The 'TIMES' logo is prominently displayed, with smaller text below it: 'WEBSTER-KIRKWOOD TIMES', 'SOUTH COUNTY TIMES', and 'WEST END WORD'. To the right, a black box contains the text: 'Teams announced Sun., March 17', 'Fill out your bracket before', and 'Thursday, March 21 at 10 a.m.'. The background of the banner features a faint, stylized bracket diagram on the right side. At the bottom left, it says 'Sponsored by: - Fielder - Electrical Services, Inc.'

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TIMES
WEBSTER-KIRKWOOD TIMES
SOUTH COUNTY TIMES
WEST END WORD

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https://www.timesnewspapers.com/southcountytimes/march-is-brain-injury-awareness-month/article_947bcde0-40ed-11e9-819d-a364162ce90d.html

FEATURED

March Is Brain Injury Awareness Month

Brain injury support group meets each month at SSM Health St. Clare Hospital

Don Corrigan Mar 8, 2019



Every nine seconds someone sustains a brain injury. In the United States each year, an estimated 50,000 people die from brain injury, and another 280,000 are hospitalized.

source: Brain Injury Association of Missouri

Although most of the media attention regarding brain injuries goes to vocal NFL players like Terry Bradshaw and Brett Favre, a quieter group focusing on brain issues meets monthly at SSM Health St. Clare Hospital in Fenton.

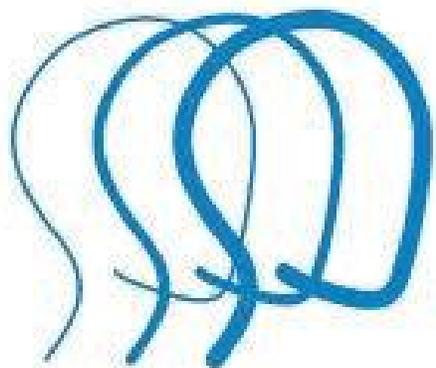
The 7 p.m. meetings on every fourth Tuesday of the month cover athletic injuries, but also take up the many other causes of harmful brain impacts – and how to deal with those impacts.

“Falls continue to be the number one cause of brain injury for every age group,” said Maureen Cunningham, executive director of the Brain Injury Association of Missouri (BIA-MO). “But the causes range from vehicle crashes to assaults. In many cases, the cause is unknown because no one reported how it happened or the person injured doesn’t remember how it happened.”

According to Cunningham, a major benefit of the BIA-MO Support Group meetings at St. Clare is that survivors of brain injury and their families know that they are not alone in life with their injuries. That is something they find as a major source of comfort.

“They all share their experiences, information, resources, tears and laughter,” said Cunningham. “Meetings vary each month. Some months have a speaker on topics related to brain injury trauma, rehabilitation, adapting to life with brain injuries.

“There are also ‘open discussion’ evenings when people will introduce themselves and share current challenges or triumphs,” she said. “Then there are other months when current members share their experiences of lessons learned, so first-time attendees have answers to questions they didn’t even know they should consider.”



**BRAIN INJURY
ASSOCIATION**

O F M I S S O U R I

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, and each day a news capsule is sent out by email to those interested. Among the factoids that have been distributed thus far:

- Military personnel, farmers, senior adults, young children and teenagers are all high-risk populations for brain injury.
- Every nine seconds someone sustains a brain injury. In the U.S. each year, an estimated 50,000 people die from brain injury.

- Almost 280,000 are hospitalized for brain injury, and 2.2 million individuals are treated in emergency rooms.
- The average cost for medical care, rehabilitation, home modifications and other costs associated with brain injury can exceed \$150,000 for a family.
- The annual cost of brain injury to society exceeds \$76.5 billion each year in the U.S. This includes medical care, rehabilitation services, home modifications and loss of productivity.

Sports Concussions

In February, BIA-MO hosted “Sports Concussions: Facts, Fallacies and New Frontiers Seminar,” in Westport.

Experts, such as Dr. Brian Mahaffey, team physician and coordinator of Major League Medical Services with the St. Louis Cardinals, discussed topics such as concussion facts and fiction, return-to-learn and return-to-play tips following a concussion, and current concussion-related research.

“A key point in this year’s seminar was the continuum of care and the importance of communication among everyone involved: the coaches, school nurses, PE teachers, athletic trainers, physicians, parents and the young people involved,” said Cunningham.

“It’s recommended that authorization from the parent for the athletic trainer or school nurse to communicate with the physician is very important,” she added. “Also, when a concussion is diagnosed it is very helpful for school personnel and the sports staff to communicate with coaches of club or recreational leagues in which youngsters may be involved.”

On the issue of return-to-learn protocols, experts emphasized the need for academic adjustments such as rest periods during the day and shorter school days and longer time for completing assignments. Return-to-play discussions noted that light exercise does help in youthful athletes’ recoveries, as long as head injury symptoms do not return.

The Missouri State High School Activity Association’s 2017–2018 Interscholastic Youth Brain Injury Report notes that the top six sports activities for youth in Missouri for head injuries are:

Football 36.6%

Soccer (B/G) 16.5%

Sideline Cheerleading 8.6%



Wrestling 7.9%

Basketball (G) 7.4%

Volleyball (G) 5.1%

The popularity of bicycling has led to a marked increase of head injuries from that sport. More crashes are sending bicyclers to the emergency room of area healthcare centers. Bicycle helmets can help reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by 88 percent.

Brain Injury Awareness

Cunningham said parents need to be on guard for serious concussion injuries when their youngsters play contact sports or travel by bicycle. If a child appears injured, it's time to ask some serious questions.

"Parents should ask their child questions that are open-ended to see if their child is understanding the question, can formulate and articulate the response, and can recall the situation," said Cunningham. "They also will want to observe changes in their child's behavior, balance, sensitivity to light or noise, headache, nausea or changes in sleep patterns.

“If the parents are the first to notice symptoms of the possible concussion, they should communicate the observed signs with school and coaches of any sports the youth plays,” she added. “This is vital so the youngster is not put at risk of sustaining another concussion.”

The BIA-MO Support Group at St. Clare is open to people of all ages. Brain injuries can happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime and support groups, such as the one at St. Clare, provide emotional support and essential information.

“It’s so important to note that the BIA-MO Support Group is open to family members and friends of a loved one with brain injury,” Cunningham said. “They are also impacted by the changes in abilities of their loved one and the injuries can have dramatic effects on daily life.”

For more information on the brain injury support group contact: mcunningham@biamo.org.

Don Corrigan

Editor-in-Chief