

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

in North Carolina, 2024

7 people a day die from TBI in NC

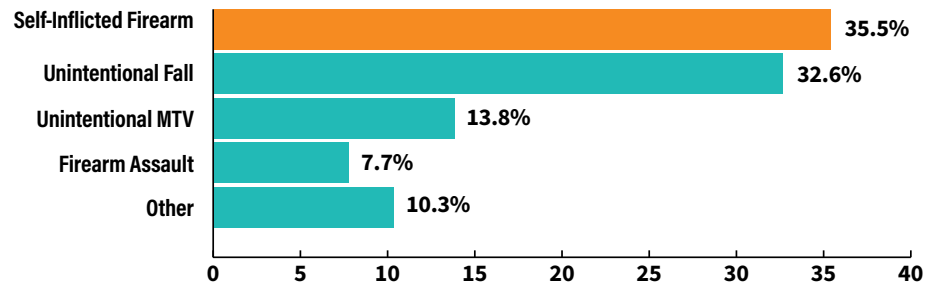
There were 2,668 TBI-related deaths among North Carolina (NC) residents in 2024.

A traumatic brain injury is a disruption in the normal function of the brain caused by a bump, blow, jolt to the head, or penetrating head injury. TBIs can affect North Carolinians at any age, from infancy through older adulthood, and can change the course of a family's life in an instant.

For local support groups, survivor resources, and educational materials across North Carolina, connect with the **Brain Injury Association of North Carolina (BIANC)**.

Self-inflicted firearm use (35.5%) and unintentional falls (32.6%) were the leading causes of TBI-related death.

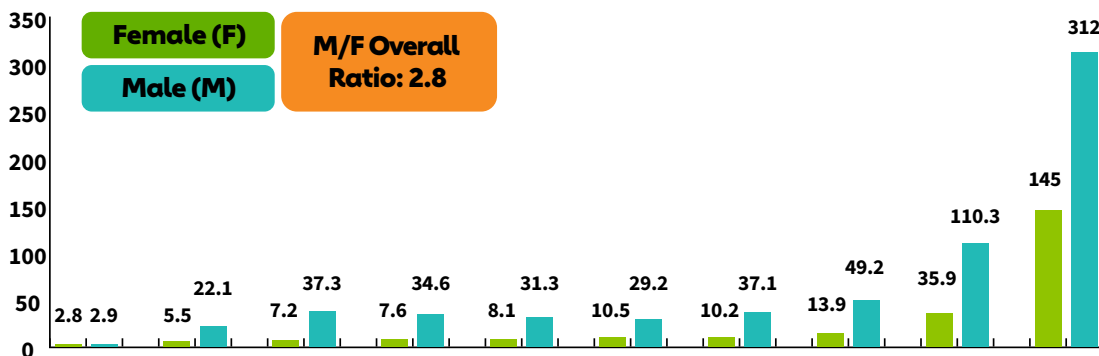
Motor-vehicle accidents (13.8%) and assaults using a firearm (7.7%) were also common causes of TBI-related death.



Locking firearms in a secure place is a critical piece of suicide prevention. Learn more at **NC S.A.F.E.**. If you or someone you know is going through a crisis, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 for free, confidential support.

TBI-related death rates drastically increase in older adults.

TBI-Related Death Rate (per 100,000) by Age and Sex,



Steps for Active Aging: Falls are a major cause of late-life TBI deaths. You can lower your risk by: 1) Asking your doctor or pharmacist to review medications for side effects like dizziness; 2) Getting your eyes and ears checked annually; 3) Removing household tripping hazards; and 4) Engaging in strength and balance exercises. Learn more at **Standing Strong NC**.

TBI Mortality Disparities Exist Across Race and Ethnicity

Non-Hispanic (NH) white residents had the highest TBI-related death rate (28.8 per 100,000) followed by NH American Indian (26.7), NH Black (22.8), Hispanic (11.8) and NH Asian (6.7) residents.

White NH % of TBI Deaths

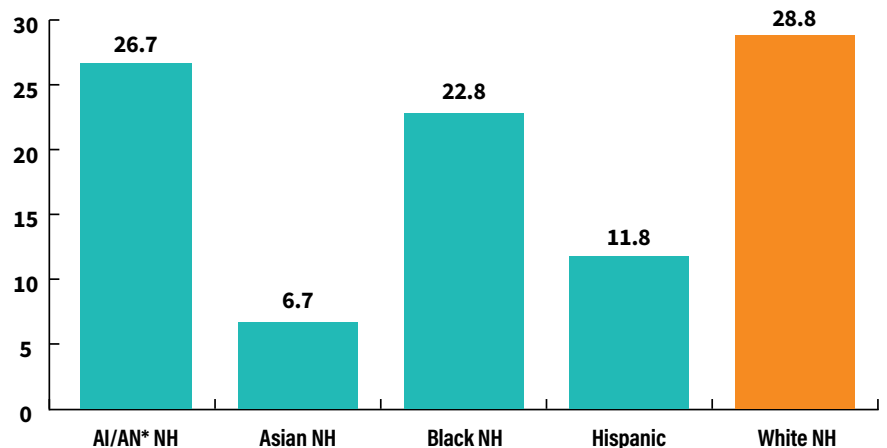
71.5%

White NH % of NC Population

59.9%

Tailoring safety messaging to North Carolina's culturally diverse populations is key to reducing disproportionate rates of TBI mortality.

TBI-Related Death Rate (per 100,000) by Race/Ethnicity, 2024



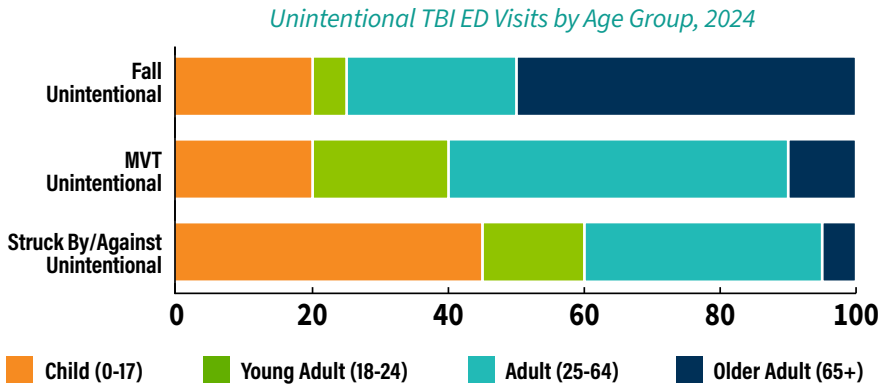
*AI/AN = American Indian/Alaskan Native

Most TBI-related ED visits are the result of unintentional injury (62.0%).

More than half of unintentional TBI-related emergency department (ED) visits were caused by falls (58.5%). Most of these falls were among adults ages 65 and older (51.9%).

One in five unintentional TBI-related ED visits caused by motor vehicle traffic (MVT) crashes were among young adults ages 18-24 (20.1%).

Residents under the age of 25 made up over half (56.5%) of unintentional TBI-related ED visits where the patient was struck by or against an object.

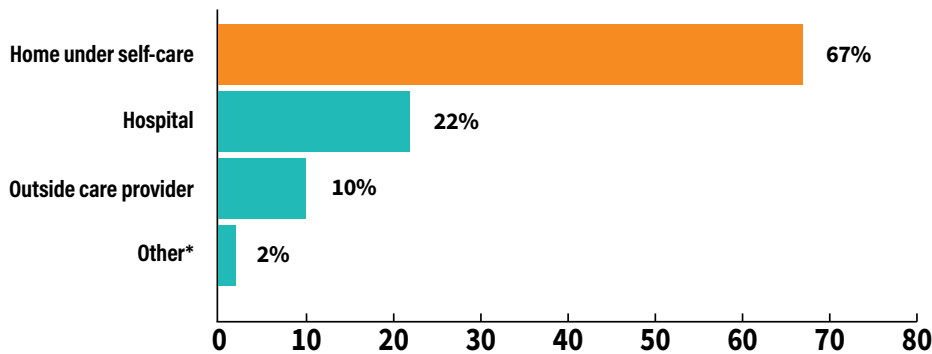


Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of TBI emergency visits, particularly impacting young adults. Protect yourself and your passengers by always wearing a seatbelt, driving within safe speed limits, and completely avoiding impaired driving. Support safer roads for all ages by visiting [NC Vision Zero](#).

Ensure children and league athletes wear properly fitted helmets and follow concussion return-to-play protocols. Learn more at the [CDC's HEADS UP](#) guidelines.

Nearly a quarter of TBI-related emergency department (ED) visits were admitted to the hospital for care.

Discharges from ED after TBI Diagnosis, 2024



*Other includes left against medical advice, died or unknown.

Two in three (66.7%) TBI-related ED visits were routine, sending the patient back home with self-care.

While many are discharged to the hospital floor, 10% of TBI-related ED visits were transferred to another facility or provided another form of care.

Among the remaining TBI-related ED visits (1.5%), 243 patients left against medical advice while 129 died.

Family and other caregivers can find resources and navigation toolkits through the [NC Caregiver Portal](#).

Two in three TBI-related hospitalizations are discharged within one week.

Length of Stay at Hospital for TBI Diagnosis, 2024

