



## Recreation and Leisure

### After Brain injury

The following ideas will help you or your loved one continue their recovery. One or more of the following conditions are not uncommon following a brain injury. Suggestions are also given for using leisure activities to help improve each.

### Physical Impairments

**Speech/Language/Cognition** – Encourage independence with communication and self-advocacy in the community.

- Games
  - Outburst, Scattergories, Catch Phrase, Taboo
- Other Examples
  - ordering food, locating items in a store.

**Paralysis/Lack of coordination** – Encourage use of affected body parts when participating in activities.

- Examples
  - crafts, cards, games, exercise, video games, Wii, swimming, Yoga

**Fine Motor Skills** –

- Examples
  - Writing/Typing
  - Board games such as Jenga
  - Crochet

**Vision** – Remember to bring your glasses or other assistive technology equipment that may assist.

- Examples
  - Large print cards/Books
  - Books on Tape

### Cognitive Impairments

**Concentration/Attention** – Try to minimize distractions such as noise and visual stimuli which can take your attention away from the task at hand.

- Examples
  - Games such as checkers, chess, and cards.
  - Puzzles

**Short Term Memory** – recall and carryover of instructions for games and new learning, daily events/activities, safety awareness.

- Examples
  - Orientation – Read Newspapers to find out date, weather, sports, and current news events.

**Long Term Memory** – Reminisce using old photos or other personal memorabilia. Ask questions about people, events, etc.

**Sequencing** – Organization of thoughts, ideas, and instructions.

- Examples
  - Cooking tasks, grocery shopping, and community planning
- Games
  - Sequence, Solitaire, UNO.

**Reading Skills** – Read menus and news articles out loud to have others evaluate accuracy.



### **Behavioral/Emotional Changes**

**Fatigue** – Allow rest periods between activities. Try not to do too much too soon.

**Anxiety** – Relaxation techniques, stress management, and coping skills.

- Examples
  - Calming music, yoga, exercise, friends/family time, outdoors.

**Self-esteem** – Try to participate in activities that allow for success. You may need to modify an activity if it is too difficult. For example, simplify the rules of an activity.

**Depression** – Fill up your schedule with old and new leisure interests to prevent isolation.

*Remember, Leisure should be FUN! It can be used to work on deficits, but one is more likely to participate if it is enjoyable.*

Information received from <http://caregiver-information.com>