



Role of Neuropsychology in Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Recovery

Patient: Male, 45

Referral Question:

Post-concussive symptoms impacting return to work

Background:

Six months after a mild TBI (concussion) from a cycling accident, the patient continued to report memory lapses, mood swings, and difficulty concentrating. His primary care provider referred him for neuropsychological evaluation to inform his treatment plan.

Findings:

Evaluation showed mildly suppressed processing speed and variable attention, in the context of otherwise within expectation cognitive performances, with elevated symptoms of both depression and anxiety. His cognitive profile, medical and injury history, and psychological results helped distinguish between cognitive vs. emotional contributors to his symptoms. Psychoeducation was provided regarding concussion recovery expectations and factors that can contribute to persistent symptoms. Recommendations focused on addressing contributing factors (e.g., depression, anxiety) through follow-up with his physician and a mental health provider, as well as development of compensatory strategies, with a focus on gradual return-to-activity and return-to-work.

Outcome:

Patient felt empowered to know that addressable factors may be contributing to his symptoms, and was determined to address them.

Patient gradually returned to activities and work, pacing his activities and using strategies when needed.

He experienced a reduction in depression and anxiety symptoms following initiation of cognitive behavioral therapy with a mental health provider. He enrolled in and completed a cognitive rehabilitation program through Minder, focused on compensatory strategies that are helpful following concussion and in the context of mood/anxiety changes.

"The evaluation helped me and my doctor understand the whole picture—not just the injury – and helped me get back to my daily life."

- Patient