

# A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH FOLLOWING CONCUSSION IN WOMEN: Key differences in treatment protocol unique to women from a functional/emotional perspective

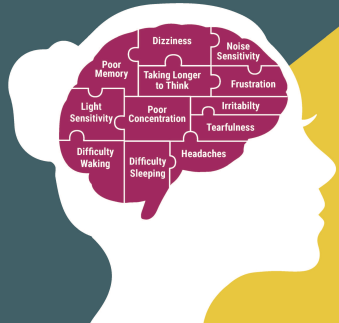
“If concussion is the invisible injury, then females are the invisible population within that injury.”

– REF Katherine Snedaker, LCSW, Norwalk, Conn. founder of non-profit PINK Concussions, 2013

## PROBLEM

“Several recent studies have confirmed what women and their physicians anecdotally have known for years: **Women experience greater cognitive decline, poorer reaction times, more headaches, extended periods of depression, longer hospital stays and delayed return-to-work compared to men following head injury.**”

– Jeffrey J. Bazarian, M.D., M.P.H.

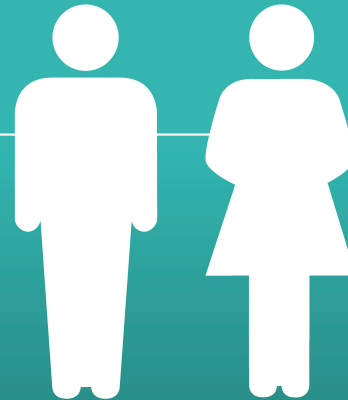


## DISTINCTIONS

As a woman, additional considerations need to be acknowledged and taken into account in both diagnosis and treatment.

### IMPACT OF A CONCUSSION

- Depression/Anxiety/Irritability
- Fatigue/Sleep Disorder
- Post Traumatic Headache
- Balance
- Dizziness/Vertigo
- Cognition Impairment
- Tinnitus/Noise Intolerance
- Pregnancy
- Hormonal changes (involving pituitary gland)
- Menstrual cycle changes
- Executive functioning problems impacting life roles including pregnancy/motherhood
- Emotional expressiveness



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## INTERVENTION

### Education

- Displaying a diagram of the brain after concussion and how the injury to the brain was sustained
- Resources/referrals to specialists
- What to expect re symptoms
- What to expect re length of recovery

### Awareness

- Sleep hygiene
- Importance of proper nutrition
- Provision of a safe exercise program
- Effective coping techniques for emotional changes
- Cognitive rehab (including remedial and compensatory strategies)

**It is important to remember when treating the concussed client, the key differences between males and females to ensure that the treatment approach is client-centred.**

### Support

- Validating a woman's experience and supporting her reported post-concussive symptoms
- Refrain from challenging her experience or trying to "FIX" it
- Empathy, listening, remaining open, being patient and joining with the patient in her experience

