

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Heading off the damage

NEW STUDY EXAMINES BRAIN WAVES AFTER HEAD INJURIES

If you've recently fallen off your bike, or had a car accident, the University of Tasmania wants you! Researchers from the UTAS School of Psychology are looking for participants in a new study mapping people's brain waves after a head injury.

Dr Mathew Summers and Dr Frances Martin are trying to find out if brain injuries contribute to attention span and concentration

Previous studies have shown that victims of a head injury often suffer from poor concentration and attention spans.

"Attention and concentration deficits are a common consequence of head injury, and that these deficits often get more severe after a head injury," said Dr Summers

"This study will examine how the brain wave activity detected in specific areas of the brain relates to difficulties with attention and concentration, commonly suffered as a consequence of head injury."

The researchers are seeking volunteers over the age of 18 who have sustained a head or traumatic brain injury of any severity occurring more than 3 months ago. The cause of the injury may have been a motor vehicle accident, motorcycle accident, fall, or sports related injury.

"At present, assessment of the cognitive deficits associated with head injury is a time consuming process," said Dr Summers.

"This study will assess the cognitive deficits associated with head injury using electroencephalographic, or EEG measurement of brain wave activity, then compare the data directly with performances on standard neuropsychological tests of attention and concentration."

It is hoped that the results of this study will result in a more sensitive and accurate assessment of the cognitive deficits arising from head injuries.

The study will run until June 2007 and will require volunteers to attend a single testing session lasting 2-3 hours. If you would like to be involved in this new research, contact Dr Mathew Summers on 6234 3266 (UTAS Launceston campus).

For more information/interviews please contact:

Dr Mathew Summers: 0408 595 235

Information Released by:

The Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: 6226 2124 Mobile: 0417 517 291

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au