[Scrolling ticker of AZ statistics]

Example: ARIZONA BY THE NUMBERS section on biaaz.org homepage.

June 2017 - January 2018 in Arizona:

812 Arizonans died of a suspected opioid overdose
5,202 Arizonans suffered a suspected opioid overdose
455 Arizona babies were born addicted to opioids
3,114 reported overdoses in Maricopa County
993 reported overdoses in Pima County

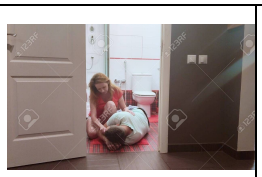
Pain is the #1 reported symptom after a brain injury.
70% of hospitalized patients are discharged with an opioid prescription.
75% of heroin users in treatment started with painkillers.
Arizona invests $265 million annually in substance abuse treatment and prevention.
(If we can find more statistics on brain injury and opioids, that'd be great.)

[Infographic]

Example: Like this, but better.

[Thumbnail index which takes us to the different sections]

Jump to:

Brain Injury Survivors	 If you have overdosed	Family and Caretakers	Info for professionals	Info for military and veterans

[Introduction Text]

Brain Injury and the Opioid Epidemic

It is no secret that the United States is in the midst of an Opioid Epidemic. In 2017, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Eric D. Hargan declared a public health emergency to address the national opioid crisis. Today, about 130 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

But how does this relate to brain injury?

People with TBI are more likely to be prescribed opioids than those without. In fact, 70% of people receiving rehabilitation for TBI receive an opioid prescription. A person with a brain injury may be more susceptible to opioid addiction. Once a dependence on the drug has formed, a person with TBI may have more challenges when seeking treatment and recovery.

On the flip side, opioid use or misuse may put a person at a higher risk of acquiring a brain injury. These drugs may make individuals more likely to experience a fall, a vehicle accident, assault or family violence. There is also the possibility that a person using opioids will experience an overdose.

When a person overdoses on opioids, their breathing slows or stops altogether. This deprives the brain of oxygen, which can result in hypoxic (not enough oxygen) or anoxic (no oxygen) brain injury. Even if a person survives the overdose thanks to the

overdose-reversal drug Naloxone (Narcan), there still may be lasting effects on the brain. Most people who overdose will do so more than once, and every subsequent overdose means more possible injury to the brain.

Struggling with substance use is hard enough on its own, and it can be even more difficult for someone with a brain injury. If you or someone you love struggles with one or both of these conditions, the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona can offer guidance, resources and support. We are dedicated to raising awareness and working toward prevention of future brain injuries.

If you have any questions about brain injury, substance use, harm reduction or recovery, give us a call to speak with a member of our Resource Facilitation team. You are NOT alone and there IS help.

Call our Statewide Neuro Info-line 1 (888) 500-9165 or email us at info@biaaz.org.

Video - Dr. David Adelson and Miss America Camille Schrier discuss the link between brain injury and opioid misuse: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icqBQFC7h_A

Video - BIAAZ's Recovery and Family Support Specialist Liz Bradley talks about what we are doing to help people who are at risk, struggling with, or recovering from substance misuse: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pB8mkzvcluQ

Upcoming Events:

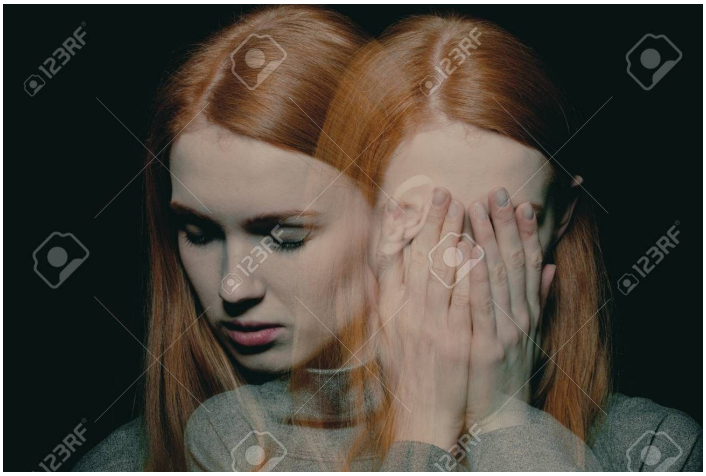
(30 day calendar similar to https://www.biaaz.org/events, but embedded on this page, not a link to a separate page. Instruction text: "Roll over event for more information")

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Recent News and Updates:

(Updated weekly with something new, is it possible for us to embed certain AP articles automatically, based on keywords?)

Biaaz article	Article from another publication	Article from another publication



If you have been prescribed opioids or are struggling with opioid dependence:

(Info, steps and resources [we are going to get info from licensed medical professionals])

If you have been prescribed opioid medication for pain, it is important that you understand the risks associated with its use.

Risk of dependence:

Opioid dependency means that your body starts to rely on the medication to simply feel normal. This can happen even at low doses and over a short amount of time. Once a dependency is formed, stopping the medication can cause you to feel increased pain and symptoms of withdrawal.

Risk of increasing tolerance:

Over time, a person with an opioid dependency may find that they need more and more of the drug to treat their pain or avoid withdrawal. This is very dangerous, as larger amounts of the drug increases risk of overdose.

If a person builds up a high tolerance and then does not take the drug for a while, their tolerance may decrease without them realizing it. So if they return to the drug at the same dosage as before, it may now be far too much and cause an overdose.

Risk of turning to illicit drugs:

If a person is prescribed an opioid and develops a dependence, and then loses access to their prescription, they may turn to other methods of treating their pain or withdrawal symptoms. They may ask friends or family to provide them with medications not prescribed to them. They may even start stealing others' medications.

If prescription medications can't be obtained, or become cost prohibitive, a person may turn to "street drugs" such as heroin and illegally pressed pills. This is especially dangerous, as there is no way to know exactly what you are taking. Many street drugs are laced with Fentanyl, which is 80-100 times stronger than morphine. Since there is no quality assurance, it's very possible to encounter a poorly mixed batch that could end your life.

Risk of overdose:

Opioid overdose slows or stops breathing, which reduces or cuts off oxygen to the brain. At least two people die from opioid overdose every day in Arizona. Luckily, a drug called Naloxone is available, which can reverse opioid overdose.

But death is not the only danger. The lack of oxygen to the brain can cause hypoxic or anoxic brain injury, even if the overdose is reversed with Naloxone. The longer your brain goes without oxygen, or with very little oxygen, the more likely brain injury is to occur. Multiple overdoses put you at increased risk for lasting damage to the brain, even if your life is saved every time.

Brain Injury Survivors:

If you have experienced a brain injury, it’s likely you were prescribed an opioid pain medication. Please note that because of your brain injury, you are more likely to develop a dependency or addiction, and that it may be more difficult to recover from an addiction when you have a brain injury. Please inform your doctors and support network of your brain injury, and that you may need special accommodations in order to find success in a recovery program.

What to do:

If you have been prescribed an opioid pain medication, there are steps you can take to avoid forming a dependency or overdosing.

Opioid medications should be used short-term to "take the edge off" chronic pain. They should not be used daily or over an extended period of time.

If you need more and more of the drug to get the desired effect, this means your tolerance has increased. You and your healthcare team should reassess your pain treatment plan. Ask about alternative pain management options - there are many to choose from.

If you feel you have developed a dependence to opioids, quitting and entering treatment now greatly decreases your chances of death, and of sustaining a harmful brain injury. There are medications available that can help with cravings and withdrawal symptoms. If quitting isn't possible yet, reduce your use and practice harm reduction techniques to lower your chances of overdose until you are able to quit.

Even if you are using opioid medication exactly as prescribed, it is still possible to overdose. You do not need to be addicted or using street drugs to have an accidental overdose. It is always wise to get Naloxone and make sure those around you know what to look for and how to use it.

Family Support for Addiction

- Employment Training & Volunteer Opportunities at Re:Start! ReSale Shop
- Interpersonal Violence Navigator for Those Recovering from Violent Encounters
- Peer Support for Veterans & Military Family
- Referrals for Opioid-Alternative(?) Pain Management
- Statewide Outreach & Training for Addiction Centers
- Statewide Brain Injury Survivor Support Groups
- Virtual Support Group for Families Dealing with Addiction and Brain Injury
- Training on Addiction & Cognitive Impairment for Professionals, Family Members, & Survivors, with CEUs Available
- Transportation Passes in Tucson & Phoenix
- Virtual Educational Opportunities

Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona has medication lock boxes and Narcan kits available at no cost - while supplies last. Contact us to place a request.

Click here to download our Opioid Use Disorder poster

Video - Mind your Meds: Drug Safety from Pediatrics to Geriatrics,with Miss America Camille Schrier: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1E18MvreaY

If you have experienced an opioid overdose:

(Details on hypoxic / anoxic injuries and invitation to reach out to us, resources)

AFTER AN OVERDOSE - Lasting Effects on Your Brain

Did you know?

- An opioid overdose cuts off oxygen to the brain, often causing hypoxic or anoxic brain injury, even if the overdose is reversed with Narcan (Naloxone).
- Even if you are revived and your life is saved, every overdose increases your risk of lasting damage to the brain.
- If you have ever overdosed and now feel "different," it is possible you have experienced a brain injury, which may result in temporary or permanent cognitive and/or physical impairments.

Symptoms of brain injury can include:

- Foggy Thinking
- Dizziness or Disorientation
- Balance Issues
- Slower Processing Speeds
- Judgment Issues
- Slurred Speech
- Change or Disruption in Sleep Patterns
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Mood & Personality Problems
- Memory Issues
- Trouble Reading/Writing
- Seizures
- Vision and Hearing Issues

A survivor of brain injury may experience one or several of these symptoms; every brain injury is unique to the individual it affects.

If you currently use opioids or other drugs, quitting and entering treatment greatly decreases your chances of sustaining a harmful brain injury. If these options aren't possible yet, reduce your use and practice harm reduction techniques to lower your chances of overdose until you are able to quit and get help.

Other possible causes of brain injury include falls, vehicle accidents, blows by/against an object, assault, intimate partner/domestic violence, and child abuse. Misusing opioids puts you and others at a higher risk for sustaining any of these types of injuries.

Click here to download our Opioid Overdose Survivor brochure

Family members and caretakers:

(Info about how dependence forms, how someone with a brain injury might be helped, Narcan, taking care of yourself)

Do you ever worry— “What if they overdose?”
When you love someone who misuses opioids, the statistics can be overwhelming. More than two people die every day from opioid overdoses in Arizona.

But there's more to the story — During an overdose, the brain's oxygen supply is reduced or cut off entirely. The longer the brain goes with little or no oxygen, the greater the chances of lasting brain injury, even if someone survives the overdose. Every second counts.

Carry Narcan (Naloxone), the opioid overdose reversal drug, with you whenever possible, and learn how to use it. Encourage your loved one to practice harm reduction and to never use alone. Help them enter treatment if possible.

If you feel you or a loved one may have experienced a brain injury, let's talk! The Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona works with survivors and family members to provide them the guidance and resources they need to navigate life after brain injury.

<u>Family Support for Addiction</u>

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- Interpersonal Violence Navigator for Those Recovering from Violent Encounters
- Peer Support for Veterans & Military Family
- Referrals for Alternative(?) Pain Management

- Statewide Outreach & Training for Addiction Centers
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- Virtual Educational Opportunities

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Click here to download our Family Opioid flyer
Click here to download our Family Opioid brochure

Video - Caring for Yourself While You Care for Others with Breeda Miller
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXiRWSDwzyA&t=9s or
https://www.biaaz.org/roh2020/breeda-miller-roh2020/

Video - One Day at a Time: Helpful Hints for Families and Caregivers of Survivors with Substance Abuse Disorders, with Dr. Suzanne O'Connor:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyD2kgMoJMQ or
https://www.biaaz.org/roh2020/suzanne-oconnor-roh2020/

Video - Fill Your Bucket: Realistic Coping Strategies for Families Sheltering in Place With a Loved One with Addiction, with Joyce Marter (not yet online)

Video - Don't Call Me a Caregiver: Dynamics of Family Care During Stressful Times, with Breeda Miller (not yet online)

Resources for Professionals:

(Materials, ability to access training videos from us. Profiles about our team?)

Death is not the only danger of an overdose. During an opioid overdose, breathing may slow or even stop. This reduces or cuts off oxygen to the brain, which can cause hypoxic or anoxic brain injury, even if the overdose is reversed with Narcan (Naloxone).

While Naloxone saves lives, some statistics show that up to one-third of people revived with Naloxone have needed to use it multiple times, meaning they may also have experienced multiple brain injuries.

Not only does every overdose increase the risk of death, but the chance of lasting damage to the brain increases exponentially.

If you believe your patient or client has experienced an overdose, here are some signs and symptoms of brain injury to look for:

- Foggy Thinking
- Dizziness or Disorientation
- Balance Issues
- Slower Processing Speeds
- Judgment Issues
- Slurred Speech
- Change or Disruption in Sleep Patterns
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Mood & Personality Problems
- Memory Issues

- Trouble Reading/Writing
- Seizures
- Vision and Hearing Issues

Opioid misuse may also increase chance of traumatic brain injuries caused by falls, vehicle accidents, blows by/against an object, assault, domestic violence, and child abuse.

If you feel your patient or client may have experienced a brain injury, please refer them to the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona. We're here to help.

You can also contact us to schedule a complimentary staff training, so that your facility will be better equipped to help those who may need special accommodations due to brain injury.

The Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona works with survivors and family members to provide them the guidance and resources they need to navigate life after a brain injury.

Family Support for Addiction

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- Transportation Passes in Tucson & Phoenix
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Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona has medication lock boxes and Narcan kits available at no cost - while supplies last. Have your clients contact us to place a request.

Click here to download our Providers and Professionals Opioid brochure
Click here to download our other opioid handouts for your patients (.zip file with all flyers and brochures)

Video: Helping Clients Mourn Loss(es) After Substance Misuse, with Gina Pollard (not yet online)

Veterans:

(special info for veterans)

Military Service comes with a multitude of risks and dangers. Many of those serving our country come home with scars - both visible and invisible. But what happens when our method of treating the pain becomes a new danger?

If you were treated for injury relating to your service the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona is here to help.

Resources for Veterans:

- Opioid addiction materials
- 10 hours of counseling sessions at no cost
- PTSD vs TBI information
- Certified Peer Support Specialist on staff
- Veteran Navigator on staff
- Gun locks at no cost - while supplies last

Click here to download our Military / Veteran Opioid brochure

Video - BIAAZ's Veteran Family and Peer Support Specialist Luke Faddell talks about our services for Veterans: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkPr6IESOfo

How you can help:

Services for Vulnerable Populations Committee:
This committee is set to strengthen and expand services for justice-involved youth, children in foster care, those experiencing homelessness, survivors of family violence, and survivors of human trafficking.
Meets via Zoom the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00-7:00 p.m.
CLICK HERE to volunteer
Email: info@biaaz.org

Statewide Polysubstance Misuse and Cognitive Impairment Workgroup:
Our goal is to bring attention, resources, and support to the issue of substance misuse and brain injury. Brain injury can lead to substance dependence and addiction. Substance misuse can lead to brain injury. Help break the cycle by taking a deep dive into this chronically overlooked relationship and providing support to those who are affected and most at risk.
CLICK HERE to volunteer
Email: info@biaaz.org

Share your story:

Email: (field)
Post anonymously: (checkbox)
Your Story: (paragraph text field)
(submit button)

Recent stories:

(Several recently posted stories)

Contact Us:

Email: (field)
Please subscribe me to the BIAAZ email list: (checkbox)
Message: (paragraph text field)
(submit button)

State Opioid Response Team:

Janice Podzimek	Luke Fadell, CPSS
Janice comes to the BIAAZ with 15+ years of experience in the field of brain injury programs and services. Her previous work with the Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance (MNBIA) involved the development of fee-for-service presentations and training workshops on Brain Injury Basics, as well as the implementation of a phone-based mentor program, which continues to help brain	[Luke Headshot] [Luke Bio]

injury survivors and their families who are struggling to connect with someone who “gets it.” Her training in Trauma Awareness and Resiliency has also allowed her to work extensively with underserved communities such as Native Americans and persons of color through both a brain injury and trauma-informed lens.

Her desire for a warmer climate brought Janice to Arizona, where she decided to put her brain injury background to good use by joining the BIAAZ State Opioid Response team in January of 2020. She looks forward to providing statewide training and education programs for survivors of brain injury, their families, and allied professionals, as well as raising awareness for the Opioid Epidemic as a cause and effect of brain injury.

Liz Bradley, CPSS

Ed Roth

[Ed Headshot]

Ed has an extensive background in various levels of the media and entertainment. In addition to his Executive Producer role for “Arizona Daily Mix,” a popular morning TV show in Phoenix, he was also responsible for branding “The List,” a nationally syndicated lifestyle show. Ed has been a branding and marketing executive for studios and networks, including Disney (syndicated television), Fox Broadcasting Corp. (entertainment division), and Warner Bros (syndicated television). Ed was an integral member of Byebyenow.com, an innovative dotcom/cable venture, producing two fresh hours weekly. He has also worked extensively with the San Diego Padres, Cox Communications, and Oprah.

Ed first became aware of Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona (BIAAZ) when he booked brain injury survivor, comedian, and author Mimi Hayes to appear on “Arizona Daily Mix.” This

Liz started at BIAAZ in November 2019 in Phoenix, but soon relocated to Tucson to serve as our Southern Arizona Outreach Coordinator. She is responsible for events and outreach all across the lower part of the state. The nonprofit sector is a brand new journey for Liz, but she is already finding great purpose and fulfillment in working to support survivors of brain injury and their families. As a member of our new State Opioid Response Team, Liz is tasked with shining a light on the connections between brain injury and the opioid epidemic. She is passionate about helping brain injury survivors who struggle with addiction, and hopes to raise awareness about the dangers of brain injury due to opioid overdose. Since joining us, she has become a Certified Peer Support Specialist, and now serves as the Family and Recovery Support Specialist for the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona. She has also completed courses in TBI, Person Centered Planning, Opioid Overdose Response, Human Subject Research and Motivational Interviewing. Liz co-facilitates FABI, our virtual support group for Families of Addiction and Brain Injury, and she serves as staff support for the Services for Vulnerable Populations Committee and our Statewide Polysubstance Misuse and Cognitive Impairment Workgroup.	experience opened his eyes to the importance and extent of the great work being done by the Alliance every day, and inspired him to get involved as well. He is currently working with the BIAAZ in the role of Peer Support Communications as part of their State Opioid Response (SOR) team.