

INTRODUCTION TO REHABILITATION PSYCHOLOGY

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DEFINITION

- Rehabilitation psychology is the study and application of psychological principles on behalf of **persons who have disability due to injury or illness**
- Rehabilitation psychologists, **often within teams**, assess and treat **cognitive, emotional, and functional difficulties**, and help people to overcome barriers to participation in life activities.
- Rehabilitation psychologists are involved in practice, research, and advocacy, with the broad goal of **fostering independence and opportunity** for people with disabilities.
- (American Psychological Association, 2020)

PRACTICES & SETTINGS

- Common settings:
 - Acute inpatient rehabilitation (e.g., TIRR, Rancho Los Amigos NRC)
 - Subacute rehabilitation facilities
 - Outpatient rehabilitation facilities
 - Day programs (often for brain injury survivors)
 - Home health (e.g., <https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/home-health-services>)

ACUTE REHABILITATION



TIRR
MEMORIAL
HERMANN
Rehabilitation & Research

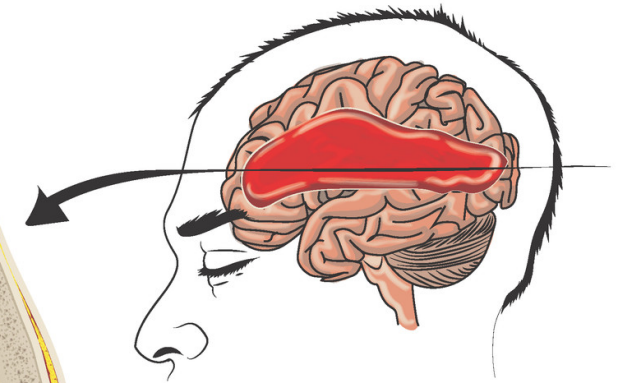
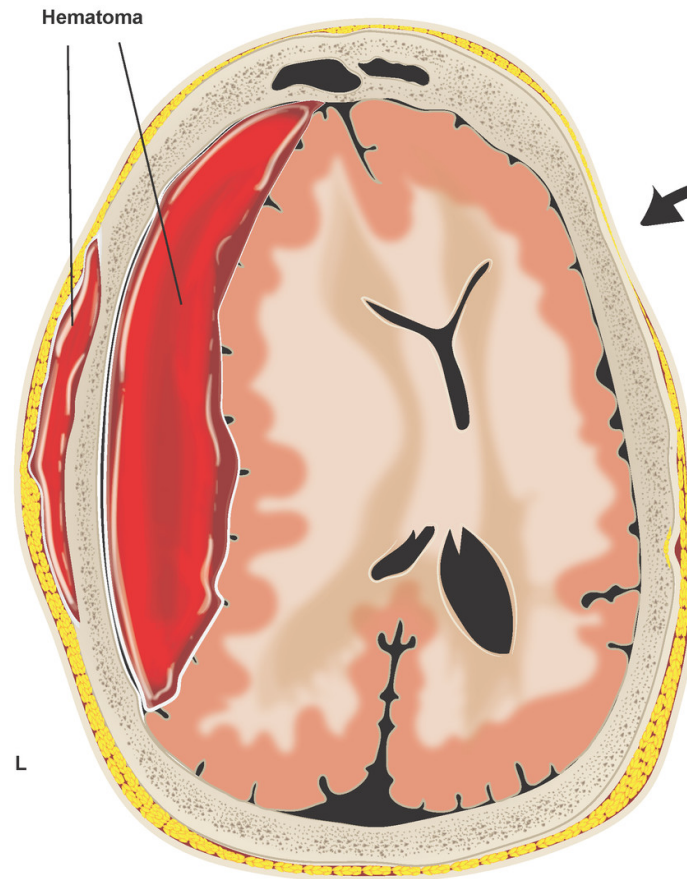


PRACTICES & SETTINGS (CONT'D)

- Common problems to treat:
 - Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
 - Stroke,
 - Spinal cord injury (SCI)
 - Limb loss,
 - Sensory loss,
 - Burn injury,
 - Chronic pain,
 - Multiple sclerosis (MS) and
 - Neuromuscular disorders
- Rehabilitation Psychologists

TBI: EXAMPLE
OF SDH

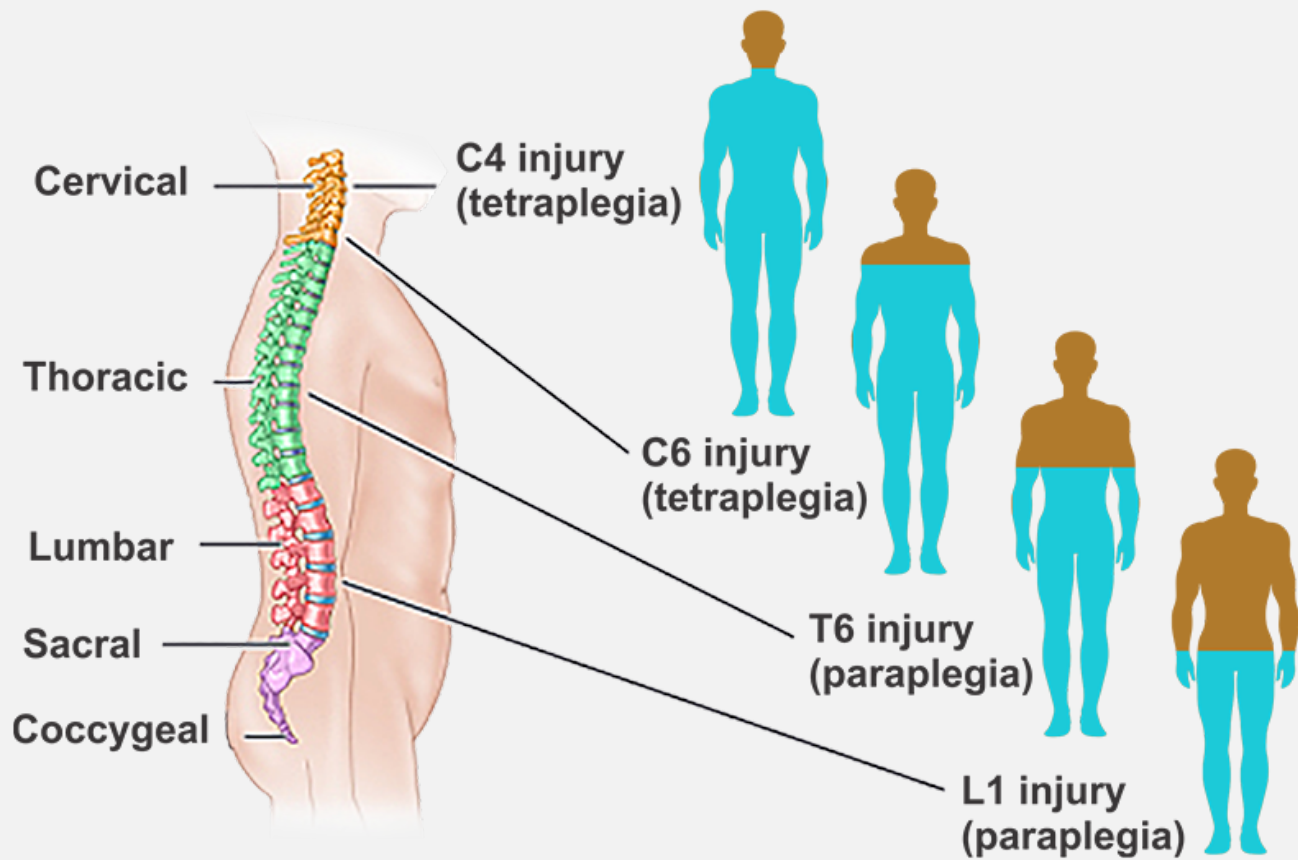
Acute Subdural Hematoma - John Doe



CT scan from 07 April 2015



Image 13



SPINAL CORD INJURY (SCI)

- American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) Impairment Scale
- Grade A to E
- E.g.,: C4 ASIA A = complete injury resulting in tetraplegia
- T10 ASIA D = very incomplete injury resulting in paraplegia/paraparesis

REHABILITATION PSYCHOLOGISTS

- Psychotherapy for emotional coping, adjustment, sleep & chronic pain issues;
- Behavioral management for impulsivity, physical/verbal aggression;
- Evaluation and treatment of family/caregiver coping and adaptation;
- Neuropsychological and Psychological Testing
 - Cognitive and psychological functioning;
 - Behavioral observation methods; and
 - Culturally sensitive interviewing techniques.

REHABILITATION PSYCHOLOGISTS (CONT'D)

- Facilitation of healthy team functioning
 - MD (PM&R, internal medicine, other consultations such as Psychiatry)
 - Nurses (Floor nurses, infectious control, techs), RTs
 - Physical Therapy (PT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech Language Pathologists (SLP),
 - Social worker (SW), Case managers (CM), etc.; and
- Enhancing use of assistive technology, including co-treatment with other disciplines.

CASE EXAMPLE

CASE EXAMPLE

Omitted

WHY I WANTED TO BECOME A REHABILITATION PSYCHOLOGIST

THANKS!