



**nurse  
anna**

## Benefit entitlement after ABI

Here is some information on benefits. We can't comment on your individual case but we can refer you to someone who can. Check out the contacts at the end of this section and speak to someone who can help get you the money you deserve. There is also information on who to contact if you would like to consider taking your case up with an injury advice lawyer to see if you are entitled to compensation.

### What is a benefit exactly?

A benefit is a payment made to you by the government. The money is to help you pay for the things you need in life. Usually people get money from going to work, but being unwell means you can't do that. The benefit payment is there to make sure you can still house yourself, eat, and pay the bills.

### Why can I claim benefits?

An ABI can cause a lot of stress. You may find that you are adjusting well but you still have problems with walking, headaches or feeling dizzy. If you struggle to concentrate you might find a job too difficult or find that you can only work when you are having a good day. Everyone gets sick from time to time and can't go to work but having long-term chronic problems can be really difficult. It can be hard to hold down a full-time job when you just aren't well enough to do it. If you can't work because you are sick you may be able to get money from the government to help you out.

You can also claim benefits if you have long-term problems which make it hard to cope financially. Maybe you go to the hospital a lot and it costs you a lot in travel. You can sometimes claim these travel costs back.

### Educational benefits

Having an ABI can cause a lot of different complications. As you grow older you have different needs and one of these can be getting appropriate funding for education. If you hurt your head when you were younger, you may well be entitled to benefits to help you through school or help fund a university or college education. The contacts at the end of this section will be able to help.

### Feeling embarrassed about claiming benefits

First thing's first, there is no blame here. No-one is going to think you are lazy. Not being able to work out of ill health is a very valid reason





for needing benefits. Anyone can get sick and anyone can develop long-term health problems at some point in their life. We are very lucky in the United Kingdom because the government recognises that ill health can make it difficult to work. Benefits are there to help anyone out financially who is too unwell to work.

## Different types of benefit

There are different types of benefits and it is a very complicated system. It is possible to claim benefits for more than one thing and you might find you are entitled to several benefits because of your circumstances. You may be able to get benefits to pay for your travel to attend hospital and also get some money for being severely disabled. Benefits can also be paid directly to any care services you need so you don't have to worry about it.

## How do I get paid my benefit?

Any money that is to be paid directly to you will be paid into your bank account or into your parent's bank account on the due date. If you find a bank account stressful, you can get someone close to you to look after it for you as a 'trustee'.

## How much do you get as a benefit payment?

This depends on your circumstances and what sort of benefits you are entitled too. Some people can claim more than one benefit so it is best you get someone to look at your individual case.

## How do I qualify for benefits?

Claiming benefits is very complicated. It all depends on things like:

- What happened to you and how does this affect you?
- If you are disabled, how does this affect you?
- If you have a long-term condition, how does it affect your ability to work?
- Do you belong to a low income family? That means if you live with your family do they have high or low paid jobs?
- Do you have children to look after? This probably won't apply to you but it could apply to some people.

Applying for benefits is very complicated too and this is not something you will have to do on your own. When you apply, your case is looked at by a benefits panel. They have a look at your application, consider everything, and then decided how much you will be paid in benefits





and which benefits you get. If you don't agree with what they decide, you can appeal and they will have a look at it again. Every case is very unique to the person applying.

## How do I apply?

When you apply, you should put down all the information that you think the benefits panel need to think about. This means write down all of the ways your ABI affects you.

There are lots of forms to fill out to claim benefits. Don't worry though, you won't have to do this on your own. Here are some organisations that can help you with benefits:

Visit this government website to see what benefits are available:

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

Or give the Benefits Enquiry Line a call: 0800 882 200.

Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau. You can find your local branch on their website:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Disability Information and Advice Line: 01302 310 123.

## Legal advice - what else can I do?

In some cases (not all), you might be able to claim compensation for your ABI if your ABI was caused by an accident that wasn't your fault. You should find out more from the Disability Information and Advice Line or contact the Law Society and get advice from a lawyer who specialises in compensation cases.

Law Society:

<http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/choosingandusing/findasolicitor>

The Child Brain Injury Trust (CBIT) also has very useful information on claiming compensation. They can recommend law firms who specialise with claiming compensation for brain injury cases. Visit their website for more information:

[www.cbit.org.uk](http://www.cbit.org.uk)

Or call 01869 341 075.

