



Brachial Plexus Injury Awareness

LETTER TO THE EDITOR GUIDELINES & TIPS

Thank you for considering providing a voice for Awareness Week in your local community. A Letter to the Editor is probably one of the easiest ways to receive Awareness coverage in your community newspaper. Here are a few guidelines to help you submit your letter:

Personalized letters are most welcome, and the Awareness Committee has provided two samples for you. Feel free to use the letters we've provided or use them as a guideline to write a more personal letter. We'd like to stress that personal letters—written in your own words- would be the best option.

Letters to the Editor should be between 150-200 words. Any longer and you risk the newspaper printing only a portion of your letter.

You **MUST** include your name, address and a contact phone number where you can be reached. Papers **WILL NOT** print your letter without this information.

We ask that you submit your letter to your local paper one to two weeks prior to Awareness Week to maximize visibility.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR #1

Dear Editor:

The brachial plexus injury community is celebrating the Annual Brachial Plexus Injury Awareness Week during **[date]**. Those of us in the local community of individuals and families affected by brachial plexus injuries implore you to join us in the effort to educate the public about infants injured at birth or others affected by traumatic brachial plexus injuries.

Brachial plexus injuries often occur during the birthing process. Availability of brachial plexus statistics vary widely, but where figures are available the general consensus is that brachial plexus injuries occur in 2-5 out of 1000 births. More children suffer from brachial plexus injuries sustained at birth than Down Syndrome or Muscular Dystrophy – yet information on this disability is not so readily obtained.

Other causes of brachial plexus injuries include: automobile, motorcycle or boating accidents; sports injuries ("burners" or "stingers"); animal bites; gunshot or puncture wounds; as a result of specific medical treatments / procedures / and surgeries or due to viral diseases. Adults who incur traumatic brachial plexus injuries often suffer from severe and chronic pain and struggle to

find support, information and adequate medical care.

Time is of the essence in treating this injury. A brachial plexus specialist must monitor the injury to optimize recovery and minimize residual effects. Immediate therapeutic intervention is critical while the injury is monitored for long-term effects and the patient or parent must be informed of treatment facilities for further options.

For more information about brachial plexus injuries, call the United Brachial Plexus Network, Inc. toll-free 1-(866) 877-7004 or visit the following web sites: **www.ubpn.org**, **www.injurednewborn.com**, **www.nbpepa.org**.

Sincerely,

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR #2

Dear Editor:

Are you aware that there is a birth injury that affects more newborns than those born with Down Syndrome and Muscular Dystrophy? Thousands of newborns are affected by brachial plexus injuries, traumatic injuries that may cause paralysis of one or both arms, each year. Availability of brachial plexus statistics vary widely, but where figures are available the general consensus is that brachial plexus injuries occur in 2-5 out of 1000 births.

The brachial plexus injury community is recognizing the Annual Brachial Plexus Injury Awareness Week during the week of **[date]**. A brachial plexus injury is the result of an injury to the nerves in the neck that make the shoulder, arm and hand functional. The resulting paralysis differs according to the severity of the injury.

Many times, families with members who have been inflicted with this injury are unaware of the treatments currently available to them, either through misinformation or lack of awareness. Those of us in the local community of individuals and families affected by brachial plexus injuries hope that we can provide a source of information and hope to those who seek treatment.

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