Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS), also known as inflicted Traumatic Brain Injury (iTBI), happens when a parent or caretaker shakes a child so that the unsupported head moves violently back and forth, causing damage to the brain and blood vessels as the brain repeatedly hits the skull.

• SBS/iTBI is a form of child abuse. It can also be a tragic result of rough play.

• The length of shaking varies, usually ranging from five to 20 seconds.
  National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

• Approximately 30 of every 100,000 children under the age of one suffers SBS/iTBI.
  Journal of the American Medical Association

• One in three children dies as a result of SBS/iTBI abuse.
  Brain Injury Association of America

• The most frequent age of SBS/iTBI victims is between three and eight months, although it is occasionally seen in children up to four years old.
  KidsHealth for Parents

• In 60 to 90 percent of SBS/iTBI cases, it is estimated that a male, usually the baby’s father or mother’s boyfriend, causes the abuse.
  KidsHealth for Parents
Signs and Symptoms of SBS/iTBI

Violent shaking is dangerous to young children because their neck muscles are not fully developed and their brain tissue is very fragile.

Immediate consequences can include:*  
- pause in breathing  
- extreme fussiness  
- seizures  
- limp arms and legs  
- vomiting  
- death

Long-term consequences can include:*  
- learning disabilities  
- physical disabilities  
- partial or total blindness  
- hearing impairment  
- brain damage  
- cerebral palsy

*Brain Injury Association of America

Prevention of SBS/iTBI

Even the most kind and loving caregiver can become frustrated by a crying child. These feelings don’t make you a bad parent or caregiver. The key to preventing SBS/iTBI is learning ways to cope with an upset child. The following are suggestions from the Shaken Baby Alliance:

- Take a deep breath and count to 10  
- Make sure the child’s basic needs (e.g. food, diaper, clothing) are met  
- Take the child for a walk or a car ride  
- Call a friend, relative or neighbor to come over for support  
- Put the child in their crib, making sure they are safe, close the door, and check on them every five minutes  
- Call the Crisis Connection Hotline at 612-379-6363 or 911 for help

NEVER, NEVER SHAKE A CHILD

For Assistance and More Information

If you or someone you know has been involved in a SBS/iTBI situation and a brain injury is suspected, please contact the Brain Injury Association of Minnesota at 800-669-6442 or visit the Web site at www.braininjurymn.org.

On-site, customized training on SBS/iTBI is available for parents, community members and professionals – including day care providers, advocates, and legal, healthcare, law enforcement, and community-based staff. Call 800-669-6442 to schedule a training.

This information is for educational purposes and should not substitute medical advice. If you or someone you know is in immediate physical danger or needs medical attention, call 911.