Executive functioning following mild closed head injury.

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This study was aimed to identify impaired attentional components in mild CHI patients. The CHI features taken into account were age (< or = 30 vs. > 30 years), loss of consciousness (yes vs. no), and time after injury (few days vs. some months). The groups tested were composed of 26 patients and 26 controls (matched for age, sex and education).

Experiment 1 used a dual-task paradigm (Umiltà et al., 1992), which taps executive functions. The double task-single task difference was greater for the CHI group, but only for patients older than 30 years and/or with consciousness loss.

Two years after injury, some of these patients were retested: The results showed that this deficit was still present.

Experiment 2 studied visual selective attention using the Navon (1977) paradigm. In this case, there were no differences between patients and controls. The results are discussed with reference to the anterior/posterior attention systems.