Table 1

Different disorders seen after brain damage

Function	Coma	Brain-stem death	Vegetative state	Minimally conscious state	Locked-in syndrome
Sleep-wake cycle	Absent	Absent	Present; and often near normal	Present; and often near normal	Present; normal
Maintains respiration and circulation	Variable; may be very unstable with autonomic dyscontrol	Absent	Present; may have difficulty protecting airway	Present; may have difficulty protecting airway	Present; usually has difficulty protecting airway
Aware; able to process information	Absent	Absent	Absent	At times, to a low level and only intermittently	Fully present and normal
Motor activity	Reflex only	Spinal reflex only	Reflexive; and may have spontaneous but not goal-directed movement	Inconsistent and intermittent, verbal and other movements, sometimes goal directed or in response to meaningful stimulus	No limb movement or speech, but active control over eye movements to communicate. Usually controls blink