

WOMEN WITHOUT LIMITS

1. **Have you ever** been physically abused by your partner, caregiver or someone important to you?
2. **Have you ever** been told that you are not a worthwhile human being?
3. **Have you experienced** neglect of your health care needs by your partner or caregiver since your SCI/D?
4. **Have you ever** been denied assistance with any of your needs specific to your disability?
5. **Has anyone forced** you to have sexual activities?
6. **Has medication ever** been withheld from you?
7. **Are you afraid** of your partner, your caregiver or a family member?
8. **Have you ever** been denied access to your mobility aide?
9. **Have you ever** been denied access to your finances or financial information/situation?

If the answer to any of these questions is YES, you are not alone. And, there is something that YOU CAN DO!



NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Women Without Limits advisory committee to United Spinal conducted a survey of women with SCI that included questions regarding the incidence of neglect and abuse. An initial survey was completed by participating women members of United Spinal. The survey was expanded to a national sample through a nationwide network of websites. The findings were disturbing.

United Spinal Member survey group:

- 21% reported having been denied use of a mobility aide;
- 22% reported having experienced neglect of health care needs.

United Spinal National survey group:

- 33% reported having experienced neglect of health care needs,
- 20% reported having experienced threats of physical injury and
- 23% reported having been denied use of a mobility aid since their SCI/D.

According to www.kcsdv.org:

Women with disabilities are more likely to experience abuse by a greater number of perpetrators and for longer periods than non-disabled women.

Crime victims with disabilities are less likely than those without disabilities to reap the benefits of the criminal justice system. A crime may go unreported for many reasons: mobility or communication barrier, the social or physical isolation of the victim, a victim's normal feeling of shame and self-blame, ignorance of the justice system or the perpetrator is a family member or primary caregiver.

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ABOUT “WOMEN WITHOUT LIMITS”

The United Spinal Association’s “Women Without Limits” Advisory Committee is committed to enhancing the lives of all women with spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D) by identifying and addressing the many issues that are relevant in their lives. Our work is accomplished through education, advocacy, increased awareness and protection of civil rights to ensure adequate healthcare and expand life choices of women with SCI/D.

ABOUT BARRIER FREE LIVING

Barrier Free Living is an agency in New York City that has been addressing the issue of domestic violence and the abuse of people with disabilities since 1986.

Social workers and case managers that are trained in the issues of disability and abuse are available at Barrier Free Living’s Domestic Violence Hotline Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5PM Eastern Time: (212-533-4358).

Hotline calls are answered by New York City’s domestic violence hotline at times when their office is not open.

Freedom House, Barrier Free Living’s totally accessible emergency domestic violence shelter, has worked with victims with disabilities (as well as victims with children with disabilities) from 13 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

WOMEN WITHOUT LIMITS and UNITED SPINAL

ASSOCIATION stand together to help you confront abuse and neglect. If you or someone you know has experienced neglect or abuse, we strongly urge that you take immediate action.

- ◀ Never hesitate to call 911 if you are fearful for your life!
- ◀ Contact your local mental health hotline for support, help and resources.
- ◀ Tell your primary care physician and be sure to get any health care service recommended.
- ◀ Talk to a counselor, psychologist, social worker or therapist for help.
- ◀ Contact your local battered women’s shelter for help, support and safe haven.
- ◀ Remove yourself from abusive and neglectful relationships and settings. Again, get support and help from a professional (i.e. counselor, therapist, nurse) or a friend/family member that you can trust.
- ◀ Be your own best advocate for a healthy life.
- ◀ **KNOW & BELIEVE** that you are an individual who deserves to be treated with **DIGNITY & RESPECT!**

United Spinal Association is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization formed in 1946 by paralyzed veterans. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of Americans with spinal cord injuries and diseases (SCI/D). Membership is free and open to all individuals with spinal cord injuries and diseases.

[Click here to join United Spinal](#)

[Click here to find out more about United Spinal](#)

You make it happen!

From our one of kind Kids Sports Spectacular events to the important work done by United Spinal’s Women Without Limits program. Your generous donations make it happen for paralyzed Americans.

[Click here to make a secure online donation.](#)

United Spinal offers a large variety of free downloadable booklets on topics that range from Disability Etiquette to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

[Click here to visit our publications page.](#)

United Spinal Association

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