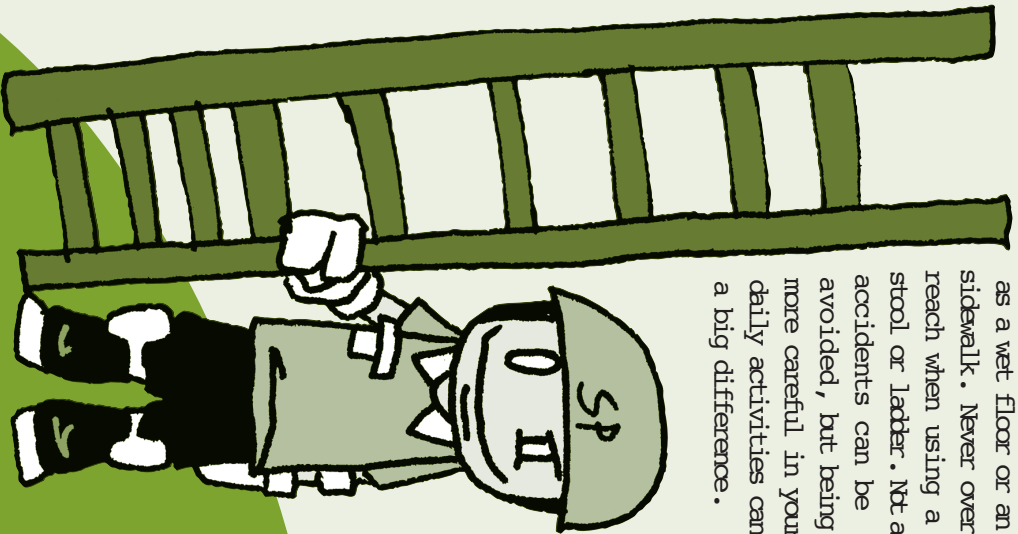


Watch Your Step

Everyone falls down. What you may not realize, however, is that many spinal cord injuries occur from simple falls. When walking or running, always watch your step and look for hazards that may cause you to slip, such as a wet floor or an icy sidewalk. Never over reach when using a step stool or ladder. Not all accidents can be avoided, but being more careful in your daily activities can make a big difference.



Some Useful Resources

Think First, www.thinkfirst.org, is an award-winning public education program of the National Injury Prevention Foundation that educates young people about personal vulnerability and risk taking. Its focus is on brain injury and SCI prevention.

Spinal Cord Injury Information Network, www.spinalcord.uab.edu, is a web site of the Model SCI System at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This site contains resources about many aspects of SCI, including a section on prevention.

National Safe Kids Campaign, www.safekids.org, promotes safety from injury for children ages 14 and under from a variety of causes, including vehicular and swimming accidents, burns, falls and poisoning. Its programs are provided through 314 state and local SAFE KIDS coalitions.

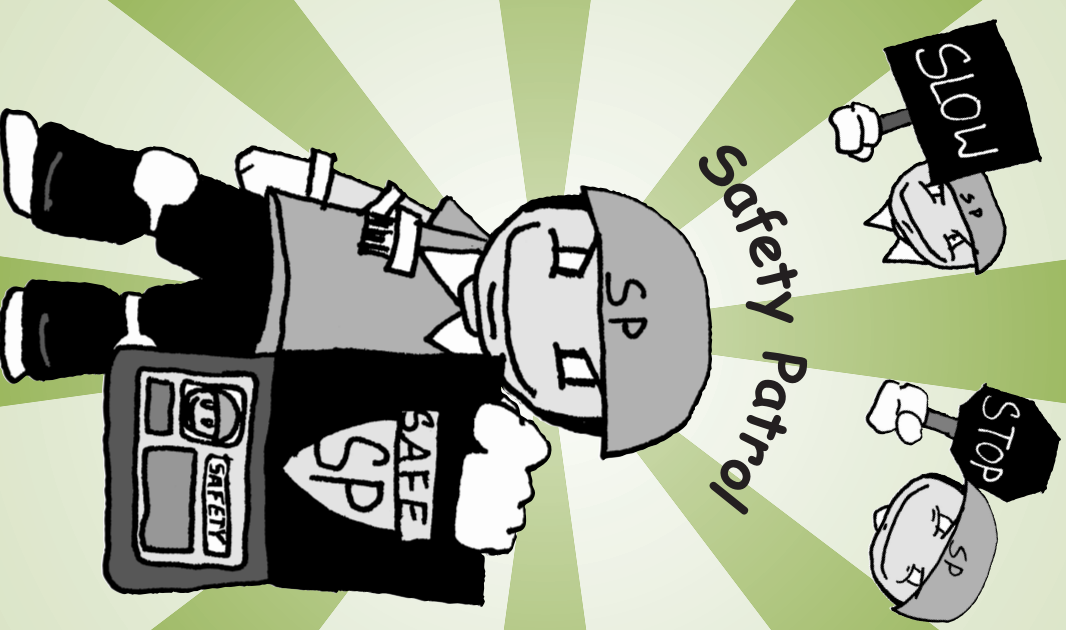


For more information please visit
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STAY SAFE

Preventing Spinal Cord Injury



What is Spinal Cord Injury?

Your spinal cord extends from the base of your brain, all the way down your neck and the middle of your back to your waist. The spinal cord is filled with nerves that carry messages (called impulses) back and forth from all parts of your body to your brain.

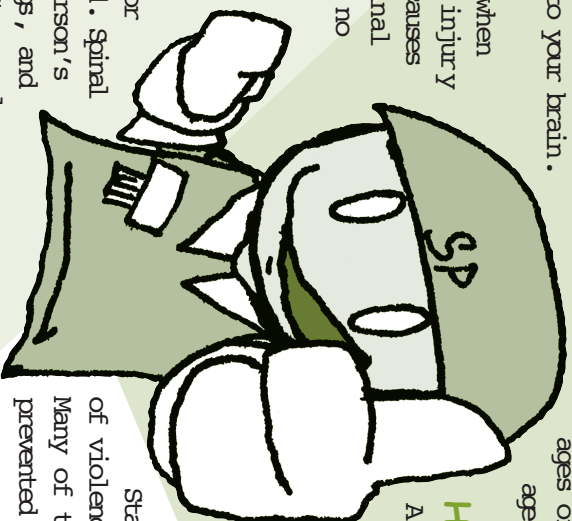
A spinal cord injury occurs when someone suffers a traumatic injury to their neck or back that causes so much damage to the spinal cord that some nerves can no longer send messages to the brain.

The most common types of injuries are caused by bruising of the spinal cord or pressure on the spinal cord. Spinal cord injury may affect a person's ability to use their arms, legs, and other parts of their body. It may also cause difficulty breathing, and can affect sense of feeling or touch. The types of disability, however, vary depending on the severity and location of the injury on the spinal cord.

Medical treatment and care help most people with spinal cord injury lead full and productive lives.

Did You Know . . .

- Every 41 minutes a person in the United States sustains a spinal cord injury.
- There are about 11,000 new cases of spinal cord injury reported in the United States each year.
- The total number of people with spinal cord injuries in the United States is estimated to be 222,000 to 285,000.



- Males are more likely to sustain a spinal cord injury and account for over 78% of injuries reported.

- Reports show that most of the people who suffer spinal cord injuries are between the ages of 16 and 30, but the average age at injury has been steadily rising.

How Do People Get Hurt?

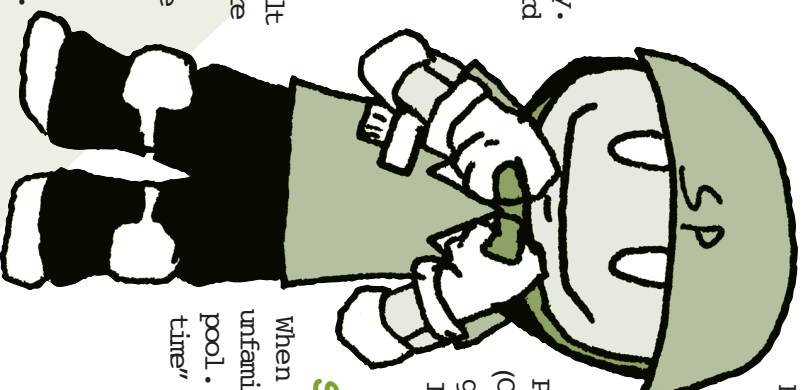
A recent study published by the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center of Birmingham, Alabama reports that motor vehicle accidents (50%) and falls (23.8%) account for most spinal cord injury cases in the United States. Other causes include acts of violence (11.2%) and sports (9.0%). Many of these injuries may have been prevented if individuals took the proper safety precautions.

Stay Safe

Not many people believe they can become a statistic of spinal cord injury; however, it happens every day. It is important to know that spinal cord injury can happen to anyone at any time. There are some protective measures you can take to avoid getting a spinal cord injury.

Buckle-Up

Always make sure to wear your seatbelt when traveling in an automobile. There are approximately 6.4 million automobile accidents each year. The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that the typical driver will be involved in an accident of some type on an average of every 6 years.



Automobile accidents can occur when you least expect them, so it's important to always wear your seatbelt at all times.

Wear Your Helmet

Always make sure to wear a helmet when riding on a bicycle.

Each year, over 500,000

people receive bicycle-related injuries. Bicycle helmets protect your head in case you fall or get into an accident. Your helmet should have a sticker on it from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), certifying that it meets governmental safety standards. If your helmet doesn't have a CPSC sticker, get one that does.

Swim Safely

When swimming, never dive into an unfamiliar body of water or swimming pool. Always practice "feet first, first time" to learn the depth of the water.

