Preventing Spinal Cord Injury

STAY SAFE

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.

For more information please visit United Spinal Association’s Web site at www.unitedspinal.org or contact us at:
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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 safety and sexual health. This site also contains resources about many aspects of spinal cord injury prevention, rehabilitation, and spinal cord injury prevention.

Spinal Cord Injury Information Network, www.spinalcord.uab.edu, is a web site providing information on spinal cord injury prevention, rehabilitation, and other aspects of spinal cord injury. This site contains resources on spinal cord injury prevention, rehabilitation, and other aspects of spinal cord injury.

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. Its programs are provided through the state and local Safe Kids coalitions. Some programs are provided through the state and local Safe Kids coalitions. Its focus is on brain injury and SCI prevention. This site also contains resources about many aspects of spinal cord injury prevention, rehabilitation, and other aspects of spinal cord injury.

A big difference. Daily activities can make more careful in your yard avoided, but being aware of the risks can be a real challenge. Be alert to the 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.
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
- 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 a person's sense of feeling or touch.

The types of disability, however, depend on the severity and location of the injury on the spinal cord.

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 injuries 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 reduce your risk of injury. Time there are some protective measures you can take to avoid spinal cord injury.

- Wear Your Helmet
- Buckle-Up

Wear Your Helmet

Always make sure to wear a helmet when riding 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. Stickers on your helmet certify that it meets government safety standards. If your helmet doesn’t have a CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) sticker, it means your helmet doesn’t meet the mandatory safety standards. Your helmet should be replaced every 5 years. Make sure your helmet fits properly and snugly.

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 on average of once every 6 years. You are more likely to cause an accident than to be a victim of one. Always make sure to wear your seatbelt.

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. If you’re not sure, it’s better to stay out of the water.