

FALL 2022



South
Carolina
Spinal Cord
Injury
Outcomes
Database
Study



This newsletter is a product of the South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Outcomes Database, which is a study of outcomes among people with spinal cord injury (SCI) in the state of South Carolina. The study was designed to help us better understand the needs of people with SCI in South Carolina and is supported by the South Carolina SCI Research Fund, grants 2017 SI-02 and 09-001.

Health, Employment and Longevity Project South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Outcomes Database Study NEWS & UPDATES

Research Highlight

Psychoactive Substance Use Among Individuals with Chronic Spinal

Introduction

Psychoactive substances are drugs or other substances that affect how the brain works. They can cause changes in mood, awareness, and behavior, and may contribute to increased risk of adverse outcomes, such as overdose or death. A few studies have found greater use of psychoactive substances among those with spinal cord injury (SCI), and there is a need for better understanding of the extent of this issue. The purpose of this study was to identify patterns of non-prescription psychoactive substances use (e.g., cannabis, cocaine, amphetamine-type stimulants, inhalants, sedatives or sleeping pills, hallucinogens, and opioids) among individuals with SCI, and to assess the role of demographic and injury characteristics in psychoactive substances use.

Key Findings

- Of the 4,577 participants, 24.1% of participants claimed they have used at least one nonprescription psychoactive substance. Among these participants, 12.1% reported only using cannabis, while 7.7% reported only using other psychoactive substances.
- Cannabis was the most frequently reported psychoactive substances (16.4%) followed by sedatives or sleeping pills (8.0%).
- It was shown that women, participants with higher levels of education and income, and those with C1-C4 injuries who were unable to walk were less likely to report the use of psychoactive substances.
- Race and ethnicity were not related to psychoactive substances use.

What does this mean?

The study found nearly 25% of participants reported non-prescription psychoactive substance use within the past 3 months, which is higher than in the general population. There were differences in how personal characteristics related to individual's substance use. These findings may be used to identify individuals at a higher risk for psychoactive substance use, and tailor interventions. Further research will allow for a better understanding of the patterns seen between SCI and psychoactive substance use, which may prevent poor outcomes among those who are vulnerable.

Supported by the South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund (SCSCIRF) (grant nos. SCIRF 2017 SI-02, SCIRF 09-001) and from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) (grant nos. 90RT5003, 90DPHF0009). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the policy of the SCSCIRF, NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government or the state of South Carolina



“We are analyzing the data to identify any SCI outcomes related to COVID-19”

South Carolina SCI Study Updates

South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Outcomes Database Study

We continue to **collect new data** for the South Carolina SCI Outcomes Database. During the current data collection cycle, which began on January 9, 2022, we have enrolled 46 baseline participants with recent SCI (1.5 to 2 years post injury), identified through the state surveillance system. There have been 267 follow-up assessments completed (3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years post-injury) by people with SCI who have been tracked since COVID-19 started in March 2020. We are analyzing the data to identify any SCI outcomes related to COVID-19.

For example, in last years' data we found that 28% of participants reporting

delaying or cancelling medical care out of fear of catching COVID-19. We will use this year's data to identify if SCI outcomes continue to be affected.

We continue to partner with you. We ask that you help us by completing the surveys when we send them. In turn, we will analyze the data and share our findings with you.

We post newsletters and other types of research materials on our website:

<https://chp.musc.edu/research/help/tools>

Thank you for your help!

November is Men' Health Awareness Month

- A growing number of men – around 10.8M globally – are facing life with a prostate cancer diagnosis.
- Globally, testicular cancer is the most common cancer among young men.
- Across the world, one man dies by suicide every minute of every day, with males accounting for 69% of all suicides.

Mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer – Movember Foundation is taking them all on.

Check out more at:

<https://us.movember.com/about/foundation>



Recent Publications

The following manuscripts were recently accepted to be published in upcoming professional journals:

DiPiro, N.D., Murday, D., Corley, E.H. et al. The primary and secondary causes of hospitalizations during the first five years after spinal cord injury. *Spinal Cord* **60**, 574–579 (2022).

Cao, Y., DiPiro, N.D., & Krause, J.S. (in press). Staying pressure injury free: The role of modifiable behavioral factors. *Arch Phys Med Rehabilitation*. Available online March 4, 2022

Cao, Y., DiPiro, N.D., & Krause, J.S. (in press). The relationship between health behaviors and emergency department visits and hospitalizations after traumatic spinal cord injury. *Spinal Cord*. Available



“Participants who reported healthy diets and planned exercise at least once a week were more likely to be pressure injury-free”



Research Highlight

Staying Pressure Injury Free: The Role of Modifiable Behavioral Factors

Introduction

Pressure injuries, also known as pressure sores, are one of the most common and serious secondary health conditions after SCI. We investigated the association of behavioral factors with retrospective reports of staying free from pressure injuries during a 12-month period for people with chronic spinal cord injury (SCI).

Key Findings

- Among the 3817 participants, 74% were male, 76% were non-Hispanic White, and mean age was 48 years, with an average of 12 years post SCI.
- Based on self-report assessment, 34% reported having a pressure injury in the past year.
- After controlling for the demographic and injury characteristics, we found that those in the clinical cohort and those who reported healthy diets and planned exercise at least once a week were more likely to be pressure injury-free.
- Participants who were underweight, frequently used prescription medications for spasticity, pain, and depression were more likely to have a pressure injury

What does this mean?

There are several things you can do to be pressure injury free, and develop strategies to promote healthy skin maintenance and the prevent multiple, severe, and frequent pressure injuries.

- Focus on exercise and weight management since they may have benefits in reducing your chances of developing a pressure injury .
- Being underweight was particularly strongly related to developing a pressure sore.
- Those who reported normal or even overweight status were more likely to stay pressure injury-free.

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SCI Association of South Carolina

The Breeze Peer Support groups bring together people who are experiencing or have experienced SCI. The support groups provide opportunities for our members to get out of the house, fellowship, meet new people, and learn about things pertaining to spinal cord injury. Breeze groups also gather for fun activities and outings.

For information about SCI support group in your area, push your control button and click on this link:

<https://www.scspinalcord.org/breeze-1>

“Please reach out if you have any questions”

843-792-2605

or

aust@musc.edu

Upcoming Podcast

On August 29, 2022, Dr. James Krause recorded a podcast for the MUSC Science Never Sleeps Series

Topics: The challenges, pitfalls, and triumphs of those with spinal cord injury: 50 years of research

<https://research.musc.edu/stories/science-never-sleeps>



Tuesday with Alex Blog

Alex Jackson is a very insightful person who hosts a blog, Tuesday with Alex. Per Alex, “Born in Charleston, SC, I was injured in a motor vehicle accident when I was around nine months old. I acquired a C5-C6 spinal cord injury. I don’t let my disability deter me from achieving my goals and enjoying my life. I will be sharing my experiences of living with a spinal cord injury.”

To access his latest topic, push your control button and click on this link:

<https://tuesdaytalk-withalex.wordpress.com>



Dr. Krause - Keynote Speaker

Krause was the keynote speaker at the annual conference of the Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals (ASCIP), Kansas City, MO: September 2022 He spoke on the topic The challenges, pitfalls, and triumphs of those with spinal cord injury: 50 years of research.

