



## [General Facts and Trends Involving Spinal Cord Injuries](#)

by [John Demas](#) on 02/11/09 at 1:03 pm

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### **Most Common Causes of Spinal Cord Injuries**

Over 40 percent of all new [spinal cord injuries](#) (SPIs) are caused by car accidents. Twenty-seven percent of these traumas are tied to accidental falls and 15 percent of all SPIs are the result of gunshot wounds or other violent acts. Sporting accidents (still on the rise) lead to about seven percent of these injuries. The remaining 18% of SPIs are not specifically categorized and include a broad range of activities.

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### **General Statistical Overview**

According to the National [Spinal Cord Injury](#) Center in Birmingham, Alabama, [click here for more](#), about 12, 000 new spinal cord injuries (SCIs) are reported in America each year. Far more males than females suffer them and members of various ethnic groups are seeing their numbers increase steadily. However, Caucasians still incur almost two-thirds of all new SPIs. Finally, in keeping with the overall aging of America, the average age for new SCI reports is thirty-nine. Back during the 1970s, that age was closer to twenty-nine.

As of 2007, there were approximately 250,000 Americans living with a spinal cord injury. The precise number is not known, ranging roughly from about 227,000 to about 300,000.

### **Paraplegia and Quadriplegia Defined**

According to a U. S. government Web site, paraplegia is “paralysis of the lower half of [the] body, including both legs.” Quadriplegia is “paralysis of the arms and legs.”

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/paralysis.html> Those wanting to learn more about spinal cord injuries should seriously consider viewing an excellent online tutorial on the topic prepared by Medline. (Note: Medline is a project of both the U. S. government’s National Institutes of Health and the U. S. National Library of Health.)

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## **Best Prevention Tools: Education and Additional Surveillance**

Educating the public is probably the most effective tool we have for minimizing the number of new spinal cord injuries sustained each year. We cannot keep assuming that all children and adults are aware of the many dangers tied to most sporting and recreational activities.

Likewise, additional supervision may help America lower its annual number of new spinal cord traumas. Far too many swimming pools are allowed to operate without any supervision. An attentive lifeguard can save many lives.

We might also add supervision while discouraging drunk driving. Unfortunately as experienced [California personal injury attorneys](#), we see many people who have suffered from [severe spinal cord injuries](#) typically follow [motor vehicle or motorcycle collisions and accidents in the greater Sacramento area](#). Regular maintenance of nationwide sobriety checkpoints and stiffer drunk driver penalties could help significantly lower the number of [car accidents](#), the biggest source of SPIs.