

## Helpful Information and Resources for Spinal Cord Injury Patients

by *John Demas* on 02/04/11 at 12:00 pm

Once diagnosed with **spinal cord injuries**, most people feel like they've been left behind by the rest of the world. Many of them also assume that they'll never be able to achieve any of their earlier goals and dreams.

Fortunately, a number of private and university-based research centers and organizations are running **spinal cord injury** (SCI) projects offering new hope to many of today's SCI patients. New therapies and ways of rehabilitating patients are producing promising results. SCI patients are also benefitting from forming online connections with others facing similar physical challenges.

### Groups/Programs Especially Useful to SCI Patients

Since Internet links change frequently, it's probably best to simply jot down the names of the following groups or programs that interest you most and then later look them up online by using your favorite search engine.

- **The National Spinal Cord Injury Association.** This group's Web site provides an excellent A-Z index of resources that are bound to be useful to most **SCI patients**. Listings run the gamut from financial aid for higher education, medical supplies, disability rights to information about the help offered by Medicaid and Medicare. Interesting news stories, surveys and studies are also referenced on this Web site.

- **The Rehabilitation Research Center (RRC)** at Santa Clara Valley's Medical Center in California. The RRC's Web site includes specialized research links and information about a northern California mentoring program for SCI patients between the ages of sixteen and twenty-six.
- **Purdue University's Center for Paralysis Research.** This center's Web site includes links to various clinical trial programs, new research on fighting secondary SCI injuries and studies on the causes (and potential cures) for diseases like Parkinson's and Multiple Sclerosis.
- **The Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation.** Many Americans were deeply saddened when Hollywood's "Superman," Christopher Reeve, suffered an extremely serious spinal cord injury back in 1995. His struggle to regain added mobility was truly inspiring. This site offers such useful items as Quality of Life Grants for the disabled, a Paralysis Resource Center and information about the various U. S. clinics with ties to this foundation.
- **The Project to Cure Paralysis at the University of Miami's School of Medicine.** Founded back in 1985, this project is one of the world's largest trying to discover cures for every form of paralysis. This project's Web site can help people locate some of America's best neurosurgeons and physical therapists. It also provides the names of high-quality SCI hospitals around the world. The project's research links, as well as its "Resources for Living with Paralysis" should also prove very useful to many SCI patients.
- **Journey Forward.** Founded by long-term SCI patient Dan Cummings, this 501 (c) 3 organization helps SCI patients create the best exercise and rehabilitative programs for their specific injuries and limitations. Although insurance companies won't cover many of this group's most promising programs, donors provide a significant amount of critical funding. The group's Web site details various therapies, including dynamic neural stimulation, vibration training, functional electrical stimulation (FES) and gait training. Encouraging client stories, complete with first names and photographs, are also posted on this Web site. *(Note: Mr. Cummings was the subject of several news*

*stories in October 2010 when he triumphantly managed to walk one mile, even though he was originally diagnosed as a C6 quadriplegic).*

We hope this information will help SCI patients locate the additional resources they'll need while fighting to regain as much physical mobility and independence as possible.

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