



Spinal Cord Injury Education – Injuries Explained

by John Demas on 06/09/10 at 12:14 pm

The spinal cord is like your main highway. It starts from your brain and is safely secured by the spine, running down the length of your spine, or backbone. The width is the size of your index finger, but it packs a lot of power to change your life in many ways.

This is because once you suffer from a spinal injury, you could also experience other problems. The most minor of these after effects would be temporary paralysis or numbness. It could last for several minutes to several hours depending on the impact and damage.

On the other hand, you could damage your spinal cord so badly that it affects your legs and paralyzes you from waist down. It could also affect your arms and leave you with no ability to use them at all. Another terrible effect of a serious spinal injury would be damage to any or all of your sensory faculties like hearing, speaking, tasting, smelling, and touching. Needless to say, death is also a possibility.

In the United States alone, spinal cord injuries are estimated at 12,000 new incidents a year. This does not include those who die from an accident or violent act. This figure is an old one generated before year 2005, so you can just imagine how much it could have risen, just by reading the daily newspapers.

Most victims of [spinal cord injuries](#) are males, more often between the ages of 16 to 30, although recent reports from journals on spinal cord injuries, this figure now includes more men at the age of 40.

More interesting is the issue of which ethnic race has higher incidents of spinal cord injuries. Before the year 2000, majority were from the African Americans, although this has changed 180 degrees today. Now, more Caucasians are prone to spinal cord injuries pegged at over

66%, while African Americans are a little over 27%. The rest were either Hispanic or Asian Americans.

There are 5 kinds of traumatic spinal cord injuries that have been recognized by the American Spinal Injury Association. They are A-Complete, B-Incomplete, C-Incomplete, D-Incomplete, and E-Normal.

In brief, the A-Complete indicates that no sensory or motor functions are present, and the patient is completely paralyzed and unable to use his senses. The B-Incomplete means that the patient has sensory functions, but no motor functions.

The C-Incomplete is classified as a person who has some motor functions but below the acceptable level, while D-Incomplete means that half of the key muscles are functional. E-Normal means that full recovery is expected.

These categories are not distinct of each other, which means a person can move up or down categories depending on his treatment and response to the treatment.

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