

Issue 1
Winter 2021

SCIRE
SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Insider

Welcome to the inaugural edition of SCIRE Insider, our quarterly newsletter for all things SCIRE Professional and SCIRE Community

I remember when we first started SCIRE in 2006 - we were printing out the chapters and producing CD-ROMs to mail to major rehabilitation centres - so we have come a long way since then! In our many years, we have reviewed hundreds of thousands of articles and aim to provide you with the latest information online so that healthcare professionals and people with SCI have easy access to the best evidence in SCI.

As we continue to navigate living in a COVID-19 world which includes an imminent vaccination rollout, we have produced pertinent information specifically on COVID-19 and people with SCI for our audience which we will detail further below. Our YouTube channel has grown by leaps and bounds - we have 45 videos demonstrating the use of validated outcome measures for monitoring people with SCI's progress in rehabilitation, showing some of the intricacies in SCI care, and of course, living with an SCI and the associated risks of COVID-19.

We strive to provide healthcare professionals involved in SCI care the best evidence available so that people with SCI can live their best lives and recover as much function as possible. We started SCIRE Community, written in everyday language, in 2017 specifically so that everyone would have the same access to the best evidence in SCI.

Our mission remains the same as it always has been - to produce material based on the best and most current evidence so that clinicians and people with SCI can make informed decisions about their care.

Enjoy!

Janice J. Eng, PhD, PT/OT

Professor of the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of British Columbia, and Scientist at the GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre and the International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries (ICORD) Research Centre



COVID-19 and SCI: What You Need to Know

As COVID-19 continues to impact us globally, SCIRE has put together a series of factsheets based on specific, evidence-based information on COVID-19 and SCI.

Some of the key points include:

- People with a SCI may have reduced respiratory function and other factors that can predispose them to COVID-19 complications.
- Prevention is important given no COVID-19 treatment exists other than supportive care. Precautions such as physical distancing (6 feet), washing hands, cleaning surfaces, and maintaining respiratory health are essential to reducing risk, and we also include tips on how to keep your equipment clean.
- Seek medical attention should you believe that you have been exposed to the virus.

We have put together factsheets that cover the above information as well as guidance for SCI caregivers, mental health and SCI, and social isolation and SCI.

[LEARN MORE](#)

We also invite you to view our **COVID-19 AND SCI VIDEO SERIES**, where those with lived experiences and clinicians share information on a variety of important topics.



KYLIE NABATA, BSc., a medical student at the University of British Columbia, was the lead author of 'The Therapeutic Potential and Usage Patterns of Cannabis in People with Spinal Cord Injuries: A Systematic Review.'



Cannabis: A Potential Therapeutic Treatment for People with SCI

People with spinal cord injuries (SCI) commonly experience pain and spasticity, as well as other issues including difficulties performing activities of daily living, pressure sores, and cardiorespiratory problems. Limitations of current treatments have generated interest in medicinal cannabis as a possible therapy. Cannabis is currently legalized in Canada and in parts of the United States.

SCIRE authors Janice Eng and Matthew Queree, with Dr. Andrei Krassioukov and members of his lab at ICORD, recently conducted the world's first systematic review focused on cannabis and its therapeutic potential for people with SCI.

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People in Our Community: Sherry Caves

Resilience Has No Bounds – Sherry's Journey as a Mother Living with SCI

When you first meet Sherry Caves, you can immediately sense she has a strong will, and is full of determination. Hit by a drunk driver when she was just seven years old, Sherry is paraplegic and has undergone 13 or 14 spinal surgeries over the years. Despite this accident, Sherry continues to live an active life, full of adventure – she's gone sailing, hiking, zip lining and even bungee jumping. She and her husband, Darryl, also have a son, Aidan, now 26-years old.

"I never grew up feeling like I had much of a disability," Sherry mused. "As a teenager, when I travelled from my hometown to compete in sports, I had met one or two girls my age with an SCI. As an adult, though, I really didn't know many girls or women with an SCI. "When I became pregnant with my son, Aidan, I tried to seek out peers that had experienced pregnancy and parenting but with no luck. So, I went through it with a bit of ignorant bliss; with the same angst as any other mom-to-be but not knowing how my body was going to respond as I grew. I soon realized that doing this while living with an SCI ... that your disability could be magnified and at times be at the forefront."

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Read more on Sherry's journey as a mother living with SCI and the advice she has for new parents living with an SCI.



SHERRY CAVES

Sherry, pictured here with husband, Darryl and son, Aidan, on the Access Challenge overnight hike in Manning Park over 20 years ago.

"You want to keep up with your kids. You don't want to limit them. There has been an explosion in wheelchair technology recently which I didn't have access to when my son was younger. Nowadays there are power assist wheels or e-front wheel drive attachments that are quite affordable that enable a level of independence depending on your level of SCI."

Check Out the Scientific Exercise Guidelines for Adults with SCI - Translated into 6 Languages!

This award-winning paper determined guidelines that are most appropriate for adults aged 18-64 with chronic SCI (at least 1 year post-onset, neurological level C3 or below), from traumatic or non-traumatic causes, including tetraplegia and paraplegia.

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About SCIRE

SCIRE covers a comprehensive set of topics relevant to SCI rehabilitation and community reintegration. SCIRE reviews, evaluates, and translates existing research knowledge into a clear and concise format to inform healthcare professionals and other stakeholders of best rehabilitation practices following SCI.

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