



Model Systems
Knowledge Translation
Center

Quick Review of Model System Research

Characterizing the Experience of Spasticity after Spinal Cord Injury: A National Survey Project of the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems Centers

What is the study about?

This study's aim was to describe the relationship between spasticity and perceived quality of life as well as the perceived value of spasticity management approaches for individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI).

What did the study find?

This study found that spasms most often occurred in response to movement-related triggering events (e.g., moving from sitting to lying or their chair hitting a bump). However, spontaneous spasms were also among the most frequently occurring type of spasm. Participants reported negative effects (e.g., stiffness, interference with sleep, and pain) more commonly than positive effects, but spasticity was improved by stretching and exercise, and to a lesser extent, antispasmodics.

Who participated in the study?

Individuals with SCI (N = 1076) who were surveyed from 6 SCI Model Systems centers.

How was the study conducted?

This study was a survey presented in four sections: 1) respondent characteristics, spasm frequency, antispasmodic use; 2) qualities of spasticity; 3) effect of spasticity on function; and 4) quality of life.

How can people use the results?

Because the experience of spasticity can be so complex, this study can help individuals with SCI and their families learn more about how spasticity can impact a variety of factors such as mobility, sleep, comfort and quality of life.

Reference

Field-Fote, E. C., Furbish, C. L., Tripp, N. E., Zanca, J. M., Dyson-Hudson, T., Kirshblum, S., Heinemann, A. W., Chen, D., Felix, E. R., Worobey, L., Schmidt-Read, M., Marino, R. J., & Hayat, M. J. (2022). Characterizing the Experience of Spasticity after Spinal Cord Injury: A National Survey Project of the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems Centers. *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation*, 103(4), 764–772.e2.

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