

Thermoregulation and spinal cord injuries — why is it so important and how do you manage it?

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Recognise and score heat and moisture related problems in individuals with an SCI.
- Learn why a consistent, reliable evaluation of heat and moisture related problems is important and how it ensures people with SCI are empowered to explain their needs to clinicians effectively.
- How to manage heat and moisture related problems.

A spinal cord injury (SCI) affects the human body in lots of ways, particularly the impairment of thermoregulation which can have serious long term consequences. The aim of this workshop is to educate and inform participants about why thermoregulation is important, how it exacerbates other risk factors leading to skin breakdown and how to manage it in patients with an SCI. More specifically, this presentation aims to give participants effective tools to talk about heat and moisture related complaints with their patients, present the most up-to-date clinical evidence and offer advice on how to best recognise and treat thermoregulatory issues for people with an SCI.

The workshop will comprise an oral presentation summarising the most recent clinical research, an interview with a C5/6 complete tetraplegic experienced in managing these issues followed by a group discussion with Q&A.

The following structure of the workshop is:

- Opening presentation:
 - Background about thermoregulation and SCI: why do people with an SCI have problems with thermoregulation?
 - Why is it so important to help prevent heat and moisture related problems? And how this exacerbates the risk of friction and pressure.
- Demonstration of a heat and moisture risk matrix, a tool designed to score the extent of heat and moisture related complaints. We will show how to use the tool in clinical practice which will also kickstart the group discussion. Also empowers users to take control of their own health management
- Present real-life case studies about SCI and thermoregulation problems.
- Offer ways to prevent overheating and over-sweating.