

Smoking Risks after Spinal Cord Injury

Smoking is bad for your health, but it is even more harmful if you have a spinal cord injury.



Smoking makes **breathing** harder when your muscles might already be weak. Smoking can cause problems like infections, pneumonia, lung cancer, and collapsed lungs.



Smoking can affect how your **medications** work. You might need higher doses of some medications than people who do not smoke.



Smoking makes it harder for your skin to get the blood, nutrients, and oxygen it needs. This can lead to **pressure sores** and slower healing of **wounds**. This might mean you stay in the hospital longer.



Smoking and reduced physical activity because of a spinal cord injury can raise your chances of **heart problems** like blood clots, heart disease, high blood pressure, and even a heart attack.



Smoking can make nerve **pain** (neuropathic pain) and muscle pain (musculoskeletal pain) worse for people with a spinal cord injury.



Smokers with spinal cord injury have higher risk of **bladder** problems and bladder **cancer**.



People who do not smoke have a better chance of recovering **function** after a spinal cord injury.



Smoking makes your bones weaker and takes longer for them to heal if you break one. This is especially true for women.



Smoking can make **anxiety** and **depression** symptoms worse.

For more information on smoking after spinal cord injury go to:

<https://craighospital.org/resources/smoking-lungs-skin-bladder> or

<https://craighospital.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/Educational-PDFs/760.Smoking.NOD.pdf>