



Emergency Department (ED) visits Calculator

Instructions

To use our Emergency Department Visits Calculator, please visit the following link:

<https://chp.musc.edu/research/help/tools/emergency-department-visit-calculator>

Once on the webpage, choose the version of the calculator that applies to you: (1) person with SCI/family/friend or (2) healthcare professional) and answer all the questions. After all questions have been answered, click the button "calculate". From there, your personalized risk results of having an Emergency Department visit will appear. ***The healthcare professional version of the calculator has additional information for people who are interested in a more detailed breakdown of the results.***

The result from this calculator is an estimate of your risk of having an Emergency Department visit. This calculator is solely to help people understand how various factors including **prescription use, prescription medication misuse, and lack of planned exercise** affect your risk of an Emergency Department visit. These estimates reflect the average experience of a group of similar individuals and are based solely on the factors below. Many other factors can also influence your risk of an Emergency Department visit.

Our Emergency Department Calculator uses the following factors:

- Sex (male, female)
- Current age
- Years post-injury
- SCI neurological level
- Race-ethnicity
- Household income
- Weight status
- Diet
- Alcohol misuse
- Non-prescription substance misuse
- Frequency of prescription medication usage
- Using prescriptions other than prescribed
- Cigarette smoking
- Exercise

You can try calculating different risk results by changing your answers to see how it affects your potential risk for Emergency Department visit over the next 12 months. Do not use this calculator instead of seeing a healthcare provider. If you have concerns for your mental or physical well-being, please contact a service provider with clinical expertise in your area.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is the risk of an Emergency Department visit calculated?

- Our Emergency Department visit estimates are based on the actual experiences of people who completed our self-report assessments.
- A dataset was created using each person's answers as a separate observation. An Emergency Department visit table has been created using standard statistical procedures to provide an estimate of your risk of an ED visit.

Will drinking alcohol affect my risk of an Emergency Department visit?

- Although the number of drinks did not significantly affect the risk of an Emergency Department visit using our calculator, people who frequently do heavy drinking or binge drinking (five or more drinks during a single occasion) may have increased risk of an Emergency Department visit due, at least in part, to a greater risk of an unintentional injury.
- The more frequent the heavy drinking, the greater the risk.

Will taking medications to treat my secondary health conditions affect my risk of an Emergency Department visit?

- Taking a lot of prescription medications to treat pain and other secondary conditions may increase your risk of Emergency Department visits, especially due to unintentional drug overdose or other unintentional injuries.
- Heavy drinking while taking some types of medications may particularly lead to a greater risk of an Emergency Department visit. On the other hand, decreasing your use of prescription pain medication has been found to result in decreased risk of Emergency Department visit. *This does not mean individuals should stop or cut back on their prescription medication use based on these findings. Individuals with SCI who take prescription medications should consult their physicians or healthcare providers before making any changes.*

How does my amount of planned exercise affect my risk of an Emergency Department visit?

- People with SCI who did not participate in planned exercise at least once per week had a greater chance of at least one Emergency Department visit than those who participated in planned exercise at least once a week.
- Planned exercise improves your range of motion, balance, and stamina.
- For more exercise information, check out this Shepherd Center resource:

<https://www.myshepherdconnection.org/sci/home-exercises>

Should I base my health care decisions on this or other fact sheets?

- No, the information is only to help you understand what we know about your risk of an emergency department visit based on our research. These estimates should be used for general knowledge only. Do not use this information instead of seeing a healthcare provider. If you have concerns for your mental or physical well-being, please contact a service provider with clinical expertise in your area.

Check out our other resources, available on our team website: <https://chp.musc.edu/research/help/tools>

If you have any questions, feel free to call or email me, James Krause, PhD (Principal Investigator), at 843-792-1337 (krause@musc.edu) or Richard Aust (Project Coordinator) at 843-792-2605 (aust@musc.edu). Thank you for your continued interest in improving the quality of life of persons with spinal cord injury!