



## Health Behaviors and Multiple Chronic Conditions (MCC) In Persons With SCI

### Introduction

Multiple chronic conditions (MCC) means having two or more chronic conditions at the same time. Previous research has found that people with spinal cord injury (SCI) have more chronic conditions, such as diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cancer, and kidney disease. However, the risk for MCC in those with SCI is not well known. The purpose of this study was to look at MCC in people with SCI and to see if certain behaviors, such as cigarette smoking, alcohol use, binge drinking, or lack of physical activity, were related to MCC.

### Key Research Results

- We had 715 participants and 321 of them (45%) had MCC (more than one the chronic conditions).
- Those having MCC were older, more likely to be female, more likely to be white, and have a high level of injury (C1-4).
- Those with more than one chronic condition were more likely to be smokers and less likely to exercise regularly.
  - Participants who smoked at least 100 cigarettes were 57% **more likely** to develop MCC.
  - Those who had planned exercise at least 3 times a week were 37% **less likely** to have MCC.

### Conclusions & Implications

Smoking may have more consequences for people with SCI and is related to chronic conditions. These conditions may become life-threatening. Exercising may help to reduce the risk of developing chronic conditions and is strongly recommended.

#### Reference:

Cao, Y., Jarnecke, M., & Krause, J. S. (in press). Health-related behaviors and multiple chronic conditions among persons with traumatic spinal cord injury. *Spinal Cord*.

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