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The journey through co-existing injuries: Spinal cord and brain injury

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The co-occurrence of spinal cord injury (SCI) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) is common; however, the clinical ramifications are complex. Persons sustaining co-existing injuries are simply not the sum of two injuries, both SCI and TBI medical and psychosocial entities. Cognitive sequelae can hamper the acquisition of new knowledge and skills needed to regain functional independence and facilitate recovery. There is a paucity of specialized care for persons with co-existing injuries, thus a more robust understanding of the impact of TBI on SCI can assist the rehabilitation team, patient and family through the journey of recovery. This educational program will review the data and research on co-existing injuries regarding acute and rehabilitative care, functional outcomes and costs compared to persons sustaining SCI only. A case will be used to describe the effect of co-existing injuries on the patient/family system. Finally, a series of cases will be presented to outline the risks of secondary SCI complications. It is essential the rehabilitation team understand the implications of co-existing injuries. Program enhancement or specialized care is critically needed to improve rehabilitation outcomes and lifelong health and wellness of persons with co-existing injuries.

Learning Objective 1: Identify trends and research outcomes of persons with co-existing injuries

Learning Objective 2: Describe the effect of co-existing injuries on the patient/family system

Learning Objective 3: Recognize additional risks for secondary complications in persons with co-existing injuries

Biography

Lisa A Beck, MS, RN, CNS-BC, CRRN is an Assistant Professor of Nursing, College of Medicine Mayo Clinic. She is currently a Clinical Nurse Specialist in the Spinal Cord Injury Program at Mayo Clinic. She is a contributing author of "Mayo Clinic Guide to Living with Spinal Cord Injury". She is the Past President of the Nursing Section and Secretary of the Governance Board for the Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine. She has presented and published a variety of topics related to SCI.

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