

Secondary conditions in spinal cord injury: Results from a prospective survey

Abstract

Study design. Prospective, self-report mail survey with two points of measurement one year apart.

Objectives. To determine significant predictors of pressure ulcers (PU) and urinary tract infections (UTI) in adults with spinal cord injury (SCI) over 2 years.

Setting. Non-institutionalized adults with SCI living in the United States of America.

Methods. Secondary data analysis from 2 consecutive years. Independent variables included demographic, healthcare-related, functional, access to care, and health behavior measures. Dependent variables were the occurrence of PU and UTI at Time 2.

Results. Bivariate analyses showed significant associations between various independent variables and the occurrence of PU and UTI at Time 2. Separate logistic regression analyses for PU and UTI at Time 2 as dependent variables showed that PU at Time 1, not being married or cohabiting, not having access to primary care services when needed, and reporting a greater number of activities of daily living (ADL) requiring assistance were significant predictors of PU at Time 2. UTI at Time 1, a greater number of ADLs requiring assistance, and not engaging in weekly exercise are significant predictors of subsequent occurrence of UTI.

Conclusions. Findings support previous research, and indicate the need for increased efforts to provide SCI self-management education to at-risk subpopulations, including individuals with greater personal assistance needs and functional limitations.

Keywords: Spinal cord injury; pressure ulcers; urinary tract infections; health promotion