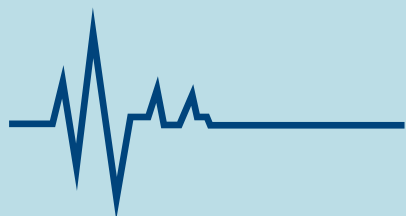


Secondary Health Conditions Among Individuals with Spinal Cord Injury

Summary

- > This fact sheet highlights the impact of secondary health conditions (SHCs) on the lives of individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI).
- > The information came from surveys completed from 2022 to 2026 by 1,149 participants. Participants were 59 years old, on average.
- > Participants reported rates of sleep apnea or another sleep disorder, heart attacks, angina or coronary heart disease, and stroke.
- > Other reported conditions concluded arthritis, urinary tract infections, shingles, and diabetes.
- > Page 3 lists preventative measures and healthy habits to help prevent the development of secondary health conditions.



Note: Percentages are based on participants with available data for each question; the number of respondents varies by item



What are the common causes of SHC in individuals with SCI?



Immobility



Weakened immune systems

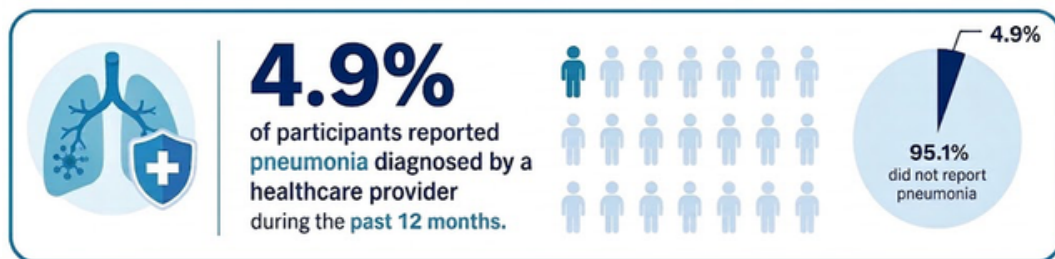


Nerve disruption



Weakened bones

Reported health conditions diagnosed by a health professional among individuals with SCI:



However, about **2 out of 10 (19.3%)** participants reported having sleep apnea or another sleep disorder.



Around **1 out of 16 (6.1%)** participants reported having a stroke diagnosed by a health professional.



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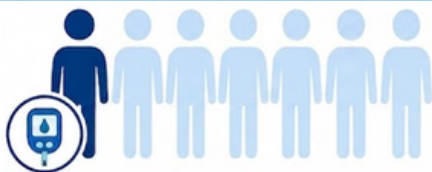
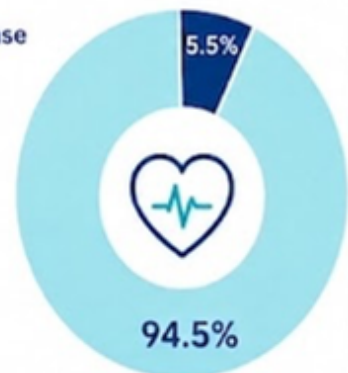
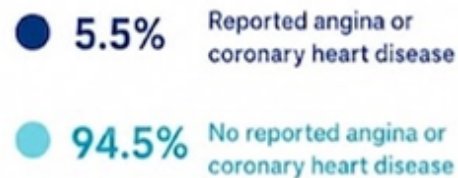
Around half of the participants **(49.9%)** reported **arthritis** diagnosed by a health professional.



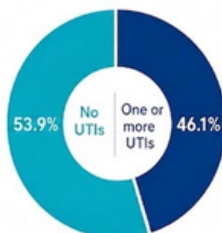
Reported heart attack or myocardial infarction diagnosed by a health professional:



Reported angina or coronary heart disease diagnosed by a health professional:



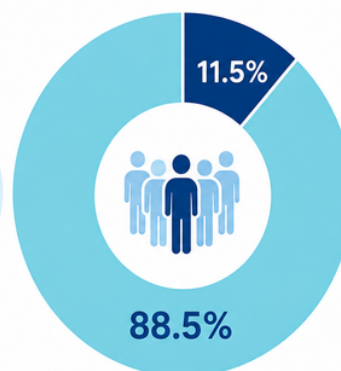
Almost **1 out of 7** participants reported diabetes diagnosed by a health professional.



Just over **half** of participants reported **no urinary tract infections** during the past year (**53.9%**), while slightly less than half reported **one or more** (**46.1%**).

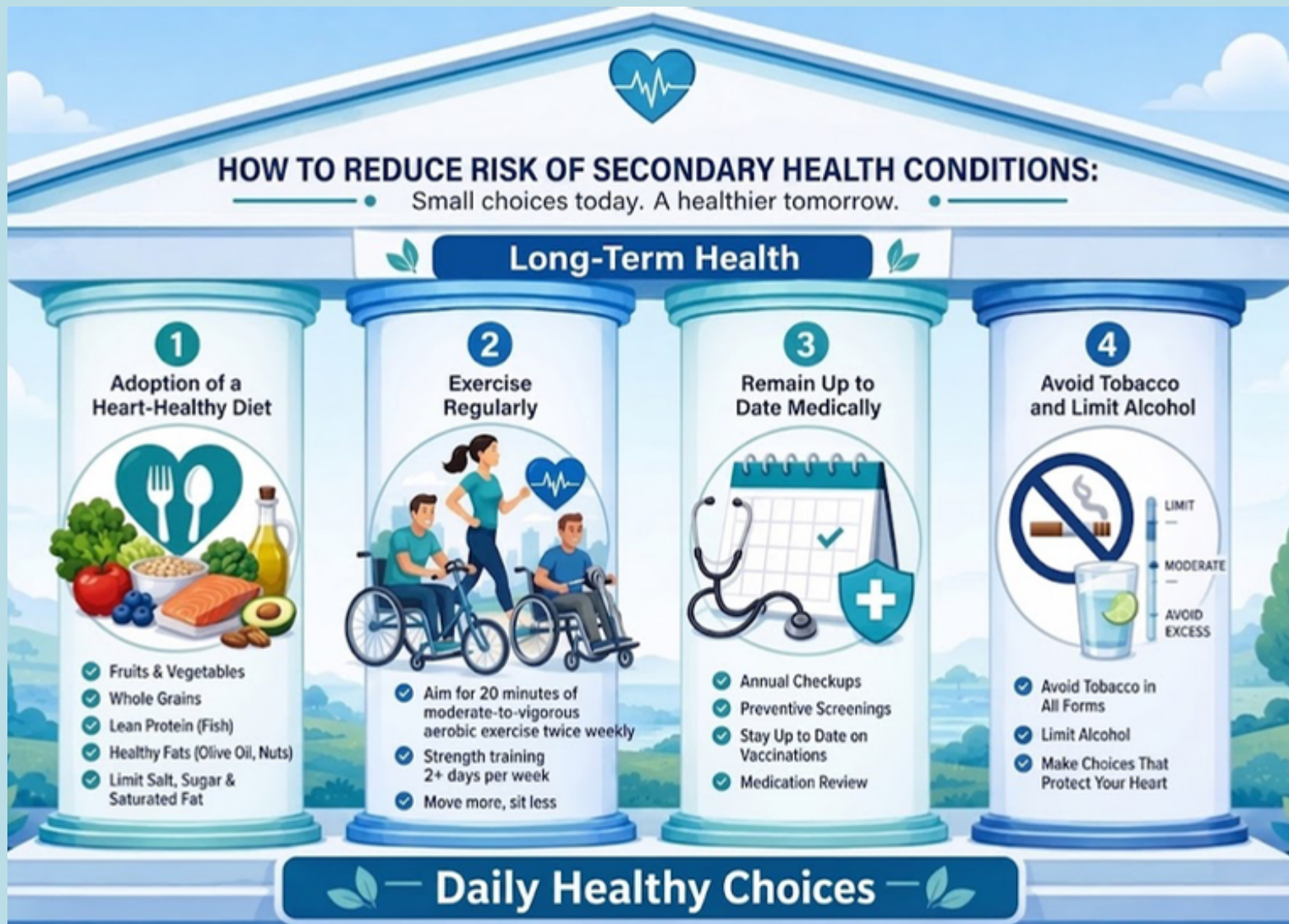
Sustaining a SCI is a traumatic, life changing event. Because it can take both psychological and physical tolls, adopting healthy habits can help individuals cope with this major life change.

Underlying secondary health conditions frequent the SCI community as mobility and functionality is limited. It is crucial to raise awareness of these risks to help promote longevity and wellness for people with SCI.



Reported shingles diagnosed by a health professional:





All generated illustrations with Chat GPT and Google Gemini

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About This Fact Sheet

This fact sheet was created using data from the Health, Employment, and Longevity Project (HELP) aging 50 database at the Center for Rehabilitation Research in Neurological Conditions (CRRNC). It is supported by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) grant 90DPCP0009. This fact sheet is not meant to replace the advice of your physician or other healthcare provider. You should always consult your physician or healthcare provider before making changes to behavior, treatment, or use of medicine.

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