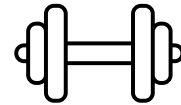


SCI Education Series

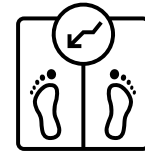


SCI Exercise Workbook

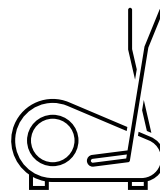


Exercise and Spinal Cord Injury

Staying active is important for everyone, including people with spinal cord injuries (SCI). Regular exercise can help improve your strength, energy, heart health, and even your mood. It can also help prevent complications like pressure injuries, weight gain, and spasticity.



But let's be honest—starting and sticking to an exercise routine isn't always easy. Life gets busy, motivation comes and goes, and sometimes it's hard to know where to begin. That's why this packet is here—to give you the tools and guidance to make exercise a part of your daily life in a way that works for you.



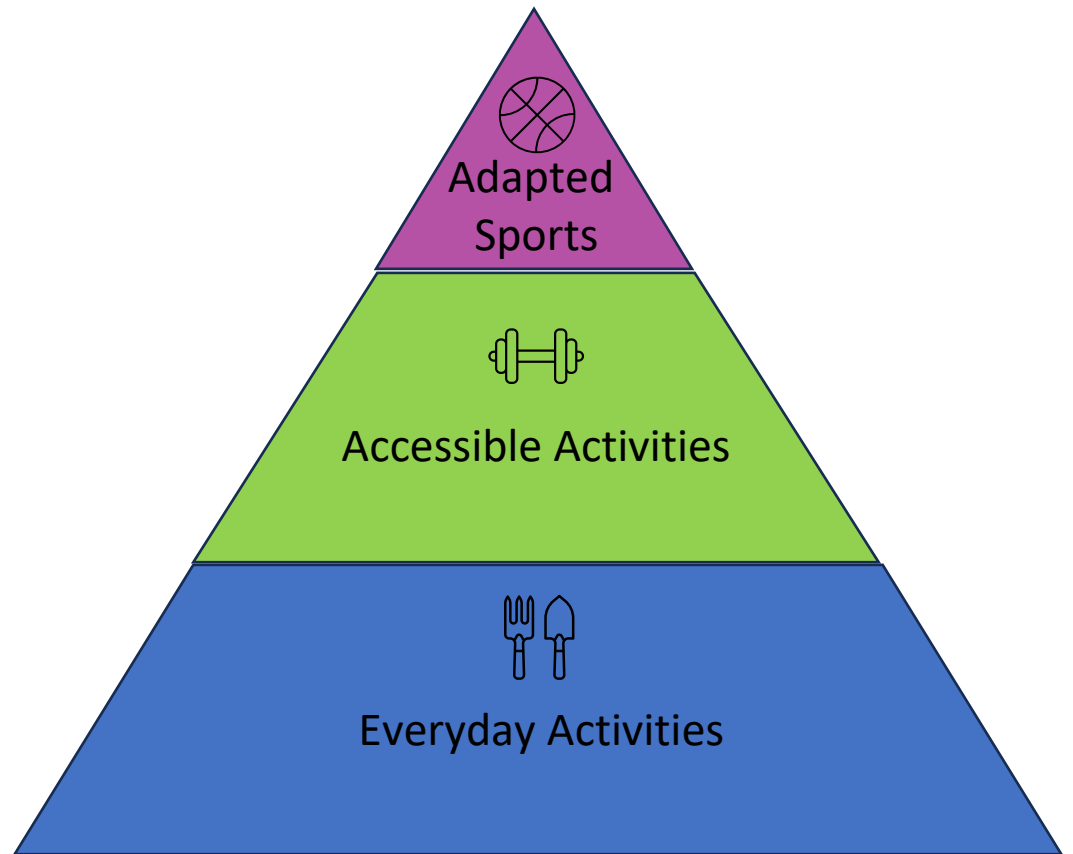
Inside, you'll find tips on different types of exercises, ways to stay motivated, and how to make exercise safe and enjoyable. No matter where you are in your journey, small steps can lead to big changes. Let's get started!

Keep in mind there is more to exercising than going to the gym!

There are ways to be active without upsetting your daily routine. This is why we recommend slowly increasing your activity using the guide below.

Ramp Up your activity:

Start at the bottom of the pyramid and work your way up to whatever level works best for you.



Everyday Activities

These activities are meant to be flexible, relatively easy, and a good starting point for people starting their fitness journey. They are also ideal for experienced exercisers who aren't able to do their usual workout routine because of a lack of time. Many of these activities can be done at home, or close to home.

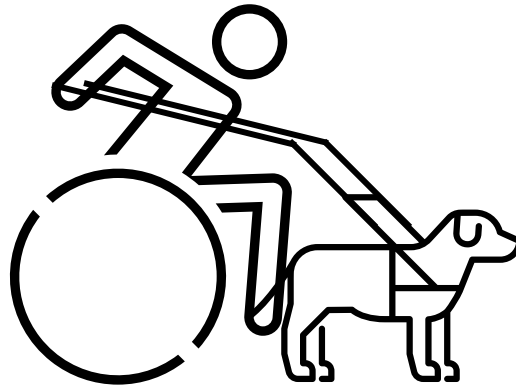
Aerobic activities

1. Walk or wheel to work or school
2. During bad weather, walk or wheel at the mall, an indoor track, or an arena
3. Park further away from your destination and walk or wheel the rest of the way (remember, be safe!)
4. Take the dog out for a walk or roll
5. Tackle some household activities, such as vacuum cleaning or washing the windows
6. Do some gardening and yard work
7. Play with your kids, nieces, nephews, etc.



Strengthening activities

1. Do some householding activities, such as carrying out heavy bags of trash
2. Do some gardening and yard work



Check out our clinic website "Exercise and Local Adaptive Sports" section for more resources!



Accessible Activities

These activities are typically higher in intensity and may bring greater fitness and health benefits than everyday active activities. Some can be done solo, while others require making a commitment to a team or organization.

Aerobic activities

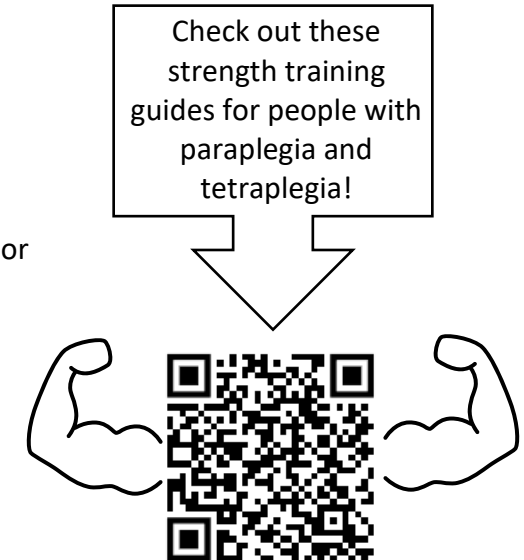
1. Wheel for fun and endurance
2. Cycle using a FES or stationary bike
3. Work out with an arm ergometer (arm bike)
4. Swim (with assistance if needed)
5. Do aerobic activities at home using exercise videos
6. Do standing frame exercises
7. Play recreational sports (basketball, curling, wheelchair rugby, tennis)
8. Dance

Strengthening activities

1. Build strength with resistance bands (can be done while watching TV, working on the computer, or reading)
2. Lift weights. Don't have any? Use cans, bottles, or other household items
3. Use cable pulleys
4. Practice yoga, Pilates or Tai Chi

Tips to Enhance Success

1. **Use action cues**
 - Cues are triggers for a planned behavior. For instance, if you're planning to exercise after work, place your gym bag beside your computer.
2. **Focus on the first stage of getting ready**
 - If you've set your alarm clock and planned a morning activity, but you're losing motivation because of all that's involved, just focus on dressing appropriately and getting out the door...the rest will fall into place.
3. **Make exercise plans with others**
 - Your exercise partners will be your conscience, and you'll motivate each other
4. **Develop an action plan**
 - See an example and blank template below



ACTION PLAN – EXAMPLE

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Activity	Resistance band workout	off	Curling with friends	off	Yoga class	off	Go for a wheel
Where	Home		Curling rink		Gym		Trail
When	After work at 4:00pm		6:00pm		3:00 pm		11:00am
Duration	25 min		1 hour		30 min		15 min
Intensity*	vigorous		moderate		light		moderate

*How to determine intensity:
 Light- can talk and sing comfortably.
 Moderate- can talk but not sing.
 Vigorous- cannot say a few words without pausing to breath.

ACTION PLAN – *TEMPLATE*

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Activity							
Where							
When							
Duration							
Intensity*							

*How to determine intensity:
Light- can talk and sing comfortably.
Moderate- can talk but not sing.
Vigorous- cannot say a few words without pausing to breath.