

Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month

Weekly Fact Sheet, Volume Three

SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2026

Fast Facts

Approximately

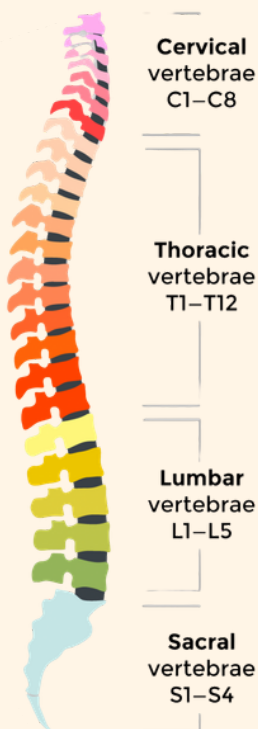
65%

of all SCIs are incomplete.

Globally, over

15 million
people are living with SCI.

*Source: National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center, World Health Organization



Types of SCI

Spinal cord injuries can be defined as **complete**, or **incomplete**.

Complete: The spinal cord has been fully compressed or severed. There is no feeling or movement below the place where the spinal cord was damaged, so no messages can travel to or from the brain to the area below the injury.

Incomplete: The spinal cord is compressed or injured, but the brain's ability to send signals below the site of the injury is not completely removed. There is some feeling and movement below the location of the spinal cord injury.

Levels of SCI

The location of the spinal cord injury determines the type and severity. Generally, injuries higher up on the spine result in more significant impairments. See the sections of the spine and body functions they effect below.

Cervical C1 - C8

Head control, breathing and movement of shoulders, lifting arms and extending elbows, extending elbows and raising wrists, extending shoulders, arms, and fingers, and finger joint movements.

Thoracic T1 - T12

Finger movement, deep breathing, deep exhaling, and stability while sitting.

Lumbar L1 - L5

Hip joint movement, hip movement towards middle of body, mpving knee to straight position, extending ankle, extending big toe.

Sacral S1 - S5

Movement of foot and ankle, toe movement, functions of bladder and bowel.