



Facts About Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)

Traumatic spinal cord injuries, by definition, are sustained as a result of blunt or penetrative trauma or acceleration-deceleration forces. SCI causes paraplegia or quadriplegia/tetraplegia, and can indicate a partial or total loss of physical function; it does not refer to degenerative or congenital conditions.

- In Georgia, 865 individuals were treated for SCI at hospitals in 2007 and 2008, according to the Central Registry for Traumatic Brain & Spinal Injuries, administered by the Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission. The prevalence rates by region are:

Region 1 (Northwest corner)	80	Region 6 (Augusta area)	64
Region 2 (North central)	46	Region 7 (Columbus area)	45
Region 3 (Atlanta area)	256	Region 8 (Valdosta area)	54
Region 4 (Carrollton area)	72	Region 9 (Savannah area)	111
Region 5 (Central Georgia)	76	Region 10 (Athens area)	61

- Yearly costs (health care and living expenses directly attributable to SCI) can range from \$218,000 to over \$741,000 in the first year and \$15,000 to over \$132,000 each subsequent year, depending on the severity of the injury. This does not include indirect costs such as losses in wage and fringe benefits for the injured person. (*National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center, 2006*).

National Average Yearly Injury-Related Expenses For Persons With Spinal Cord Injury
Note: Per the US Census, the 2005 median annual income in Georgia was \$44,439.

Severity of Injury	First Year	Each Subsequent Year
High Tetraplegia (C1-C4)	\$741,425	\$132,807
Low Tetraplegia (C5-C8)	\$478,782	\$54,400
Paraplegia	\$270,913	\$27,568
Incomplete Motor Function at any Level	\$218,504	\$15,313

- In Georgia, males sustained 82% of all SCIs in 2008. Estimates from the National Spinal Injury Database (2000) indicate that the percentage nationwide is 78%.
- Nationally, more than half of all spinal cord injuries are sustained between the ages of 16 and 30. (*National Spinal Injury Database, 2000*)
- Average estimated lifetime costs for an injured person range from \$472,392 to over \$2.9 million, depending on the severity of the injury and the age at which the injury was sustained. (*National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center, 2006*)

Most-Requested Areas of Assistance From the Commission:

Based on requests from Trust Fund applicants in FY2009, people with SCI most frequently applied for assistance with:

1. Transportation
2. Personal Support Services
3. Computers

SCI Resources:

- National Spinal Cord Injury Association, www.spinalcord.org - (800) 962-9629
- Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, www.silcga.org - (770) 270-6860
- Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, www.ChristopherReeve.org - (800) 225-0292
- Agewise/Gateway Connection, www.agewiseconnection.com - (404) 463-3333, (800) 676-2433
- Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission, www.bsitf.state.ga.us - (404) 651-5112, (888) 233-5760

The Trust Fund

The mission of the Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission is to enhance the lives of Georgians with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries. Guided by the aspirations of people with traumatic injuries, the Commission supports lives of meaning, independence, and inclusion. We:

- Administer the Central Registry to identify and contact those who are injured
- Distribute resources through the Trust Fund, and
- Advocate for improvements in statewide services.

The Trust Fund has provided over \$13 million to more than 1,500 Georgians with brain and/or spinal injuries since 2002.

To learn more about the Trust Fund, or to find additional information on SCI and read about important legislative issues and upcoming initiatives for people with traumatic injuries, visit the Commission's Web site at www.bsitf.state.ga.us.