



Living Life to the Fullest After a
SPINAL CORD INJURY



Convenient Home Delivery of **Urological Supplies**

Our Partnerships

Byram Healthcare has partnered with key organizations to provide you with this educational guide on how to enhance your quality of life after a life-altering injury occurs.

This guide will provide you with information about spinal cord injuries, instructions on how to catheterize, place an order with Byram, how to locate spinal cord injury resources, and much more.

Our goal is to enhance the quality of life of all people living with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), including veterans, and provide support and information to loved ones, care providers, and healthcare professionals.



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SPINA BIFIDA ASSOCIATION
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK





Learning About Your Spinal Cord Injury



Understanding Your Condition

The spinal cord is a bundle of nerves that communicates messages traveling between the brain and the rest of the body. The spinal cord is surrounded and protected by the spinal column (spine). The spine is made up of cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacral, and coccygeal vertebrae, from which pairs of spinal nerves emerge and extend to various parts of the body. The spinal nerves deliver sensory (feeling) information from the body to the brain and deliver motor (movement) messages from the brain to the body. After spinal cord injury (SCI), messages below the level of injury are disrupted. This may result in weakness or loss of movement (paralysis), as well as changes in sensation.

A neurogenic bladder occurs when disease or injury to the nervous system affects the bladder's ability to store and voluntarily empty urine. This can result in involuntarily urine leakage or ineffective bladder emptying. When this occurs after SCI, there are several bladder management options available to help you effectively manage your bladder.

Intermittent catheterization is a common method of bladder emptying following SCI, where a catheter is inserted intermittently to drain urine from the bladder. The catheter is removed immediately after the urine is emptied. This process is typically repeated every 4-6 hours as directed by a physician. This pamphlet reviews some intermittent catheter options and considerations.



Self-Catheterize Using **Clean Technique**

How to Self-Catheterize Using a Clean Technique After a Spinal Cord Injury:

- Gather catheterization supplies (catheter, urethral cleaning materials, lubricant (if needed), drainage receptacle (if needed). For women, a mirror may be needed.
- Position yourself comfortably and adjust your clothing. Some individuals catheterize in their wheelchairs, on the toilet, or in bed. If in bed, sit up as you're able so gravity assists with emptying. There are adaptive devices available that can help with clothing, such as a pants holder when catheterizing in the wheelchair.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water (at least 20 seconds) and dry thoroughly. Depending on your location, you may find it helpful to use a hand sanitizer if you're unable to wash your hands with running water.
- For women: Some women find that catheterizing with legs spread, and bent is comfortable, on the toilet or bed. Some women may use a mirror. There are adaptive devices available to help with positioning if needed, such as a leg spreader with mirror and lighting.
- Open your catheter packaging and prepare it according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer.
- If using an uncoated catheter (a catheter that is not pre-lubricated), drop sterile water-soluble lubricant onto the catheter for the length of the catheter to ensure a smooth passage. Do not touch the outside of the lubricant tube to the catheter.
- Clean the urethral opening as directed by your health care professional. Many people use gentle soap and water. Others may use antiseptic wipes.
- If you experience any of these symptoms, consult your doctor immediately so you can be treated before your symptoms worsen.
Men: Gently clean the head of the penis and the penis tip (use mild soap and water or a disinfectant wipe). Use a circular motion, starting at the urethra going outwards.
Women: With one hand, separate the labia and wash from front to back with soap and water or a moist towelette as recommended by your physician. Repeat.
- Gently insert the catheter into the urethra, advancing slowly until urine starts to flow. Empty the urine into a toilet or drainage receptacle such as a urinal. If your catheter has an integrated bag the urine will drain into the collection bag.
- Do NOT force the catheter if you meet resistance. Report to your physician. Some individuals may require a specially shaped catheter, such as a Tiemann or Coude catheter that can help with this problem. If the catheter touches any surface before insertion, you must use a new catheter.
- Once the urine stops draining, very gradually withdraw the catheter. Stop with drawing each time more urine drains out. Fully remove the catheter when no further urine drains.
- Clean any residual soap/lubricant and urine from the urethral opening.
- Empty the urine receptacle and dispose of the catheter.
- Wash your hands



Good Nutrition and **Physical Activity**

Nutrition and Exercise

Good nutrition and exercise are important to maintain bowel health following a spinal cord injury. Natural fiber from fruits and vegetables can help promote regular bowel emptying and prevent constipation. Adequate fluid intake is also important for bowel health, maintaining skin integrity, and can help minimize the risk of urinary tract infections. Research has shown that people with spinal cord injury are at increased risk for weight gain, high cholesterol, and cardiovascular disease.

Regular physical activity can help reduce these risks and is known to have positive impacts on mental health, mood, maintaining strength, pain levels, ability to sleep, and weight control. Exercise can also help make daily living activities easier. A healthy diet and exercise also help boost your immune system to help your body fight off infections such as UTIs.

Before starting a new exercise program, consult your physician(s) to determine if the activities are appropriate for you, taking your individual health circumstances into account.





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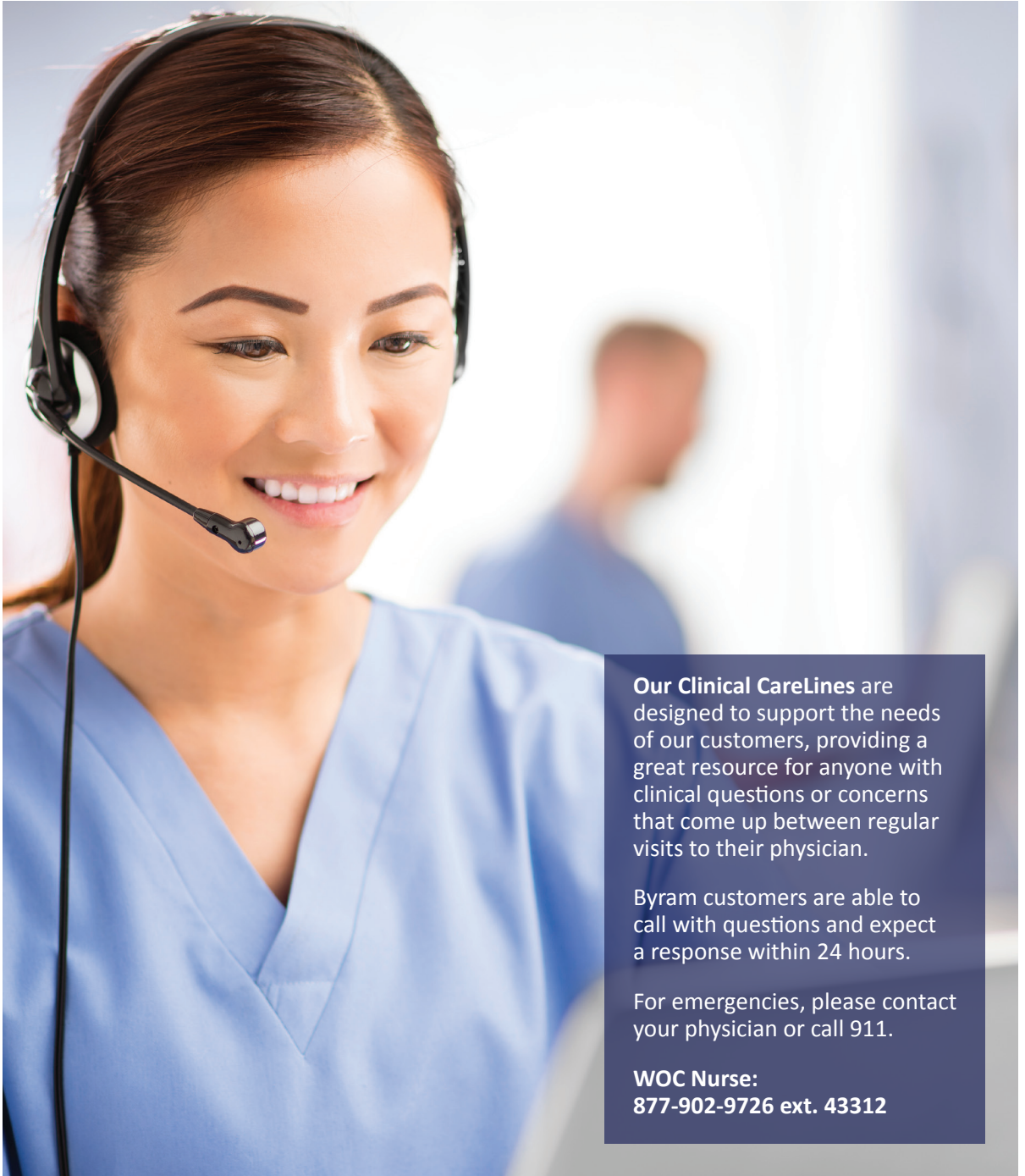
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*Interactive Voice Response



Clinical CareLines **Supporting the Needs of Our Customers**



Our Clinical CareLines are designed to support the needs of our customers, providing a great resource for anyone with clinical questions or concerns that come up between regular visits to their physician.

Byram customers are able to call with questions and expect a response within 24 hours.

For emergencies, please contact your physician or call 911.

WOC Nurse:
877-902-9726 ext. 43312

Important Safety Information

This guide is not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider. Users performing intermittent catheterization should follow the advice of their health care professional. Before using the device, carefully read the product labels and information accompanying the device including the instructions for use which contain additional safety information.

Symptoms of a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

- Leaking urine between catheterization or more frequent urination
- Urine that is dark, cloudy, gritty with sediment, or foul-smelling
- Nausea
- Headache
- Feeling tired or achy
- Pain in the lower back
- Blood in urine
- Fever
- Painful catheterization
- Increased spasticity
- Autonomic dysreflexia (in people with SCI at T6 or above)

For clinical questions contact our Clinical CareLine:
1-877-902-9726 Ext. 43312 or for more information, including valuable educational tools and our on-line product catalog, visit **byramhealthcare.com**

Digital Catalog



 SCAN ME

