**Spinal Cord Injury**

**Category 1:**

Spinal cord injuries usually begin with a blow that fractures or dislocates your vertebrae, the bone disks that make up your spine. Most injuries don’t sever your spinal cord. Instead, they cause damage when pieces of vertebrae tear into cord tissue or press down on the nerve parts that carry signals. In a complete spinal cord injury, the cord can’t relay messages below the level of the injury. As a result, you are paralyzed below the level of injury. In an incomplete injury, you have some movement and sensation below the injury.

A spinal cord injury is a medical emergency. Immediate treatment can reduce long-term effects. Later treatment usually includes medicine and rehabilitation therapy.
- [National Institutes of Health (NIH)](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spinalcordinjuries.html)

