Spinal Cord

In the past, spinal cord injury often meant a life spent immobilized with little chance for interaction or participation in the outside world. Fortunately, recent advancements in medical and rehabilitation technology have allowed persons with spinal cord injuries to lead fulfilling lives and resume active roles in their families and communities—and, in some cases, their careers. The Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program at MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital (CIIRP) has expertise to help spinal cord patients, including:

- A highly skilled group of professionals that plan each patient’s care under the direction of a rehabilitation physician (physiatrist) from MedStar National Rehabilitation Network
- Rehabilitation nurses who provide 24-hour care, bowel and bladder training, and skin care and education, as well as reinforce therapy modalities.
- On-site respiratory therapists, who monitor ventilator-dependent patients and assist with gradual ventilator weaning
- Therapies that are specifically designed to help each patient regain control over his/her personal care, improve functional skills and increase the level of independence
- Speech/language pathologists, who assist patients that have difficulty with oral and/or written communication, swallowing or cognitive issues
- Care, which is coordinated by a case manager who helps the patient and his/her family understand the recovery process and consider the options as the patient progresses from inpatient care to home health care, outpatient rehabilitation and/or community services

For further information or to speak with one of our admissions liaisons, please call 443-444-4701.

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**Spinal Cord Rehabilitation Goals**

Our clinical staff works together as an interdisciplinary team to design a unique rehabilitation program for each patient. The team helps patients attain their highest levels of functioning and independence.

Core goals of rehabilitation are to:

- Involve the patient and his/her family in the development of realistic rehabilitation goals and discharge planning
- Increase the patient’s overall strength, endurance, flexibility, and range of motion
- Instruct the patient and his/her family in proper skin care techniques, as well as building the patient’s tolerance for sitting and lying down
- Assist ventilator patients with breathing and speech techniques to maximize their independence
- Determine adaptive equipment needs and custom-fitting braces, orthotics and wheelchairs
- Help patients and their loved ones adjust to the disability and cope with the physical limitations that accompany spinal cord injuries
- **Coordinate** additional therapies and community resources, as needed

**Referral and Admission**

Prior to admission, patients who are referred to CIIRP are evaluated by an admissions liaison to determine if they can benefit from intensive rehabilitation services.

Specifically, patients should:

- Be medically stable and able to participate in and benefit from an intensive, structured rehabilitation program
- Be limited in mobility, self-care and/or the ability to function independently in a safe manner

**Insurance and Financial Arrangements**

The admission process includes verifying insurance and obtaining precertification and authorization to treat prior to admission. In cases where insurance and personal resources are insufficient to meet anticipated expenses, we will provide financial counseling to patients and families.