

AZSCIA Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit

Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

First Responders Education: OUD with an SCI

Education for Caregivers and Family Members

Recovery Support After Overdose

Curated SCI Community Resources



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AZSCIA: History and Inspiration

History of the AZSCIA

The Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with spinal cord injuries. Our goal is to promote physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social recovery. The Association focuses on peer and family support, education of consumers, families, caregivers, and professionals, and linking people to vocational, social, and recreational resources.

The Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association was founded in 1999. The organization started by providing peer mentoring to individuals with spinal cord injuries and their families. From there, the organization has grown to what it is today by providing health, education, social recreational activities, and quality of life programs for our consumers, their family, caregivers, and professionals.

We are a nonprofit corporation, guided by a Board of Directors consisting of individuals with spinal cord injury, family members, and professionals.

Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and the AZSCIA

Our project to prevent, treat, and help patients recover from OUD came about in response to the growing opioid epidemic sweeping our local communities and centers of influence. Not only do we recognize the growing amounts of people at risk, we also understand that the SCI population is at a unique risk of developing opioid use disorder, due to secondary conditions like chronic pain. This plays a direct role in quality of life outcomes.¹

Long hospital stays, painful rehabilitation, and general pain after injury all typically require either prescription drugs or opioids to manage pain. In our world, pain and trauma are intertwined. This created an urgency to learn about the various options available to our consumers to prevent, treat, and recover from OUD.

Unfortunately, we found that many of the available treatment options or recovery supports were not created with the disability community in mind. Whether it was accessibility or access to caregiving needs, there was a gap, and we felt it was our responsibility to make our state leaders and professionals aware.

Fast forward and here we are. Our project is well underway and this toolkit is a vital piece. Inside you will learn more about opioids and the dangers of prolonged use. We have also compiled important educational information on overdose response, and caregiver education to spot the signs of potentially fatal use of opioids.

Our goal is to educate our community and provide them with accessible resources to treat and prevent opioid use disorder. Along with this toolkit, our website features all of the information found in these pages. Our staff and case managers are available to assist you in getting help.

Contact Us:

Email: info@azspinal.org Phone: 602-507-4209 Website: www.azspinal.org Facebook: @AZSCIA

Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

SCOPE OF THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Opioid overdose has become a national concern. Communities around the nation are seeking to find ways to help individuals going through OUD to seek assistance, find treatment, and maintain a healthy active lifestyle.

What are Opioids?

Opioids are a broad group of pain-relieving drugs that bind to specific receptors of the brain. This class of prescription drugs include medications like: Morphine, Codeine, Methadone, Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Fentanyl, Hydromorphone, and Buprenorphine; and also includes illicit substances such as Heroin and Fentanyl.²

Through a diminished reception of pain by the brain, the body can feel relief from symptoms. However, opioids have other effects on the major systems of our body. They can alter mood, slow breathing, and cause constipation. Individuals with spinal cord injuries may utilize multiple opioids so these effects can be amplified.

What Causes an Overdose?

After taking an opioid, the user may feel a variety of effects. Pleasure, nausea, vomiting, and severe allergic reactions, and overdose are potential outcomes from opioid use.

How Does An Overdose Occur?

Deliberate misuse of prescribed opioid

Opioid contamination with even more powerful opiates like Fentanyl

Prescriber miscalculates the proper dosage

Mixing opiates with powerful benzodiazepines or substances like alcohol

Risk To The Spinal Cord Injury Population

The spinal cord injury community is at increased risk for OUD due to the severe pain often felt during rehab from an injury. Even after rehab many individuals with an injury experience chronic pain years after injury. This severely impacts quality of life and creates a potential fatal situation.

According to the Arizona Department of Health, the risk of long term opioid abuse increases significantly after 5 days. For many in the SCI population this can occur while in the hospital recovering from injury. It is our belief that many people in our community may already be affected by OUD and need accessible resources to seek treatment.

You May Be At Risk If... (Did You Know)

Are receiving a rotation of opiates as part of a pain management regimen

Have been discharged from the hospital following opioid overdose

Have completed opioid detoxification or have been abstinent for an extended period of time (and you have a reduced tolerance to the previously used opiate).³

Tolerance develops when an individual takes a substance or opiate drug on a regular basis to the point where his or her body is accustomed to a certain dosage. A larger and more frequent dose may be required to feel that same effect over time.

Loss of tolerance can occur when an individual abruptly stops taking the substance. When an individual loses their level of tolerance and takes the substance again, it can create adverse side effects, including an overdose.

Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

Preventing Overdose Deaths

1

Encourage providers, individuals with spinal cord injuries, family members, and caregivers to educate and learn how to prevent opioid overdoses.

The AZSCIA believes that education is a key component to prevent overdose deaths amongst the spinal cord injury population. First responders, pain management specialists, caregivers, and family members should seek to keep their knowledge up to date on the changing landscape of OUD.

Create accessible options for treatment and daily living care for individuals with spinal cord injuries who are misusing opioids or substance abuse disorder.

Effective treatment of OUD is possible when the spinal cord injury is offered accessible and adaptable treatment options. Currently, the SCI is facing challenges in finding facilities that provide medical substance abuse treatments along with daily living needs that are necessary due to their injury. For more information on the accessible resources in your area go to www.azspinal.org.

3

Ensure access to Naloxone within local hotspots of the SCI community.

An opioid overdose can be prevented through timely use of Naloxone. When administered properly, Naloxone can displace opioids from receptor sites in the brain and can reverse respiratory depression (usually the cause of most overdose events).⁴

If the overdose is due to ingestion of large amounts of opioids or more potent opioids like fentanyl, carfentanil, or other; multiple doses of Naloxone may be necessary. However, Naloxone is not effective in treating overdoses from benzodiazepines, barbiturates, clonidine, GHB, or ketamine. It also is not an effective treatment against stimulant overdoses from substances like cocaine, MDMA, and methamphetamine.

Naloxone injection has been cleared by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and has been in use for more than 40 years by emergency medical personnel to effectively reverse an overdose and resuscitate individuals who could have died in the absence of Naloxone administration.⁵



Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

Naloxone can come in many different forms, including injectible, intranasal, and auto-injector. Educating family members, SCI patients, and caregivers about how to administer Naloxone is essential to its effectiveness. For more information on how to properly use Naloxone visit <http://prescribedtoprevent.org/>.⁶

4

Utilize the OAR Referral Line provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services

The OAR Referral Line is an invaluable resource to utilize. This 24/7 hotline offers information for prescribers and family members to learn more about the available state and local resources. The AZSCIA is also able to assist the spinal cord injury community when it comes to tapping into accessible treatments, support groups, and educational opportunities to learn more about OUD. If you believe a family member or loved one may be affected by OUD, reach out to the hotline or give us a call. We will do whatever we can to help.⁷

It is important to remember that an individual experiencing an overdose is in need of urgent medical attention. Do not hesitate to call 911 if you believe someone is in a crisis situation. When put through to dispatch say: "Someone is not breathing and is currently unresponsive". Provide them with a specific address as well as a description of the general location of the individual. It is often common for people to hesitate to call 911 due to the use of a controlled substance. In the state of Arizona, through the passage of the Arizona Opioid Epidemic Act, those who offer aid or seek emergency services will not be prosecuted for a drug crime.



Naloxone Saves Lives

"PAIN DOESN'T HAVE TO KILL"

Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

The AZSCIA Community Based Approach

Our spinal cord injury community faces a challenge in identifying just how pervasive OUD is. For many, powerful opioids are essential in providing the quality of life needed to pursue professional and personal goals. Approximately one third of individuals with an SCI will face severe chronic pain leading to worsened quality of life outcomes.⁴ In such cases, alternatives to pain management simply do not provide the type of relief needed. The transition to their “new normal” can also create secondary conditions like depression and isolation that can be as painful as the injury. As an organization on the forefront of care for this vulnerable population we recognize that opioid use is a spectrum. Figuring out what is necessary to combat chronic pain, while looking out for potential signs of fatal abuse is critical.

The AZSCIA has built our OUD program with a three pronged approach centered on prevention, treatment, and recovery. While independent in their objectives, they seek to create a pipeline for care that ensures those going through opioid dependency are cared for throughout their whole journey. We have worked closely with community organizations and professional networks to build this community from the ground up.

Prevention

Prevention efforts are essential in curbing the wave of opioid overdoses plaguing the state and the country. The state of AZ has seen a substantial uptick in the general population for overdose related deaths. Our community is largely at risk due to the prevalence of opioid's as part of a standard pain management program. Our prevention efforts include risk reduction messaging, social media campaigns to highlight opioid risks and potential side effects, and resources for those who may be in crisis. Educating our community partners, professional organizations, and our spinal cord survivors will create accountability and transparency in helping those who may be at risk. This work also comes with the goal of reducing the problematic stigma that opioid users can perceive, thus preventing them from accessing resources and education. It is vital that prevention efforts address the importance of breaking this stigma and empowering members of the SCI community in seeking alternative options for pain management as well as, increased education to pursue increased quality of

Treatment

Possibly the most impactful area of focus; the AZSCIA is working statewide to provide access to treatment. The spinal cord injury population and physical access has often led to a lack of follow through with seeking treatment. First hand data suggests that geographical and physical impairments have provided undue burden on our population in finding a sustainable program to be a part of. Our organization has a vetted resource list with accessible treatment sites, along with a detailed history on the general process a patient can expect.

Recovery

Recovery supports are vital in ensuring the outcomes gained from treatment have a lasting impact on the patient, and their family. Caregivers, family members, and friends play an essential role. Providing the spinal cord injury survivor with the tools necessary to be successful including: peer mentors, healthy living courses, and community involvement programs; the intent is to make a lasting psychological independence from traditional opioid use. As mentioned above, this is a spectrum. The outcomes for one may not mimic the outcomes for another.

Understanding Opioid Use Disorder

The resources below are National and State level resources. In the sections that follow, we have curated state-wide resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery. The resources below are meant to educate and to shine light on the growing epidemic that our nation is facing.

National and State Level Resources (Non-SCI Specific)

Resources that can be helpful for local communities and organizations in the disability sector include:

- National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP or 1-800-487-4889 (TDD, for hearing impaired)
- United States Department of Health and Human Services: This site offers a wealth of information for families and caregivers to educate about overdose and opioid use. <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/prevention/index.html>
- The Do's and Don't's Guide: How to start a conversation with your kids about drug and substance abuse. <https://www.treehouserehab.org/talking-kids-about-drug-alcohol-abuse/>
- Surgeon General's Response To Opioid Use: This site houses the surgeon general's report on the opioid epidemic, along with resources and statistics for patients, and caregivers. <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Locate behavioral health treatment services by address, city, and zip code <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- American Academy of Family Physicians: The AAFP has gathered valuable data on the opioid epidemic. Visit to learn more about office based tools, advocacy resources, and data kits that help you better understand OUD. <https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/public-health/pain-opioids/resources.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Not only does the CDC offer education on opioid use, they also have a wealth of knowledge on many of the illicit substances that are sometimes used as a substitute. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/index.html>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse: If you are in search of infographics, science on opioids effects on the brain, or up to date trends and statistics; visit: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment>

First Responders Education: OUD with an SCI

Overdose is most common amongst individuals who use illicit opioids like heroin, and amongst those who misuse prescribed pain medication. While there has been great work done by first responders to understand the general population and overdose; there has been little commentary created to educate first responders on responding to overdose when the patient has an SCI. The AZSCIA has worked with members of our community to highlight the essential steps necessary to respond to overdose when the patient has an existing SCI.



Remember the prevalence of Autonomic Dysreflexia

Autonomic Dysreflexia (AD) is a life threatening medical emergency that affects those with an injury at the T6 level or higher. In some instances, those with a T7 and T8 injury can also experience this. AD can be prevented, but knowing baseline blood pressure, triggers, and symptoms is key.⁸

An overdose, already affecting the central nervous system of an individual is a prime example of an event that can trigger AD. Furthermore, if an individual has opiates in their system, data suggest the effects of AD could last longer. First responders need to be armed with education related to the prevalence of AD. When arriving at a potential overdose situation knowing the signs of AD can be help-ful when trying to administer life saving efforts.⁹

Potential Signs of Autonomic Dysreflexia Include:

- High blood pressure (injuries T6 and above often have a normal systolic blood pressure in the -90-110mm Hg range). Sweating above the level of injury.
- Nausea, slow pulse (slower than 60 beats per minute).^{8,9}

If you suspect an individual is experiencing AD, the first thing to do is sit up and raise the head to 90 degrees. Loosen any restrictive clothing, and monitor the individual's blood pressure every 5 minutes.

Evaluate for Signs of Opioid Overdose



After you have assessed the scene for the prevalence of Autonomic Dysreflexia, look for the signs of an overdose as well. Signs of an overdose include, but are not limited to:

1. Slow or shallow breathing. Choking or gurgling sounds indicate an inability to breathe.
2. Unconsciousness or inability to wake up.
3. Extremities such as fingernails or lips turning blue and purple.¹⁰

First Responders Education: OUD with an SCI

If you suspect an overdose try to stimulate the individual to illicit a response. You can call the person's name, stimulate the sternum or even the individual's lips. If they do respond ensure they are responsive and breathing. Do your best to keep the individual awake and alert. If the individual does not respond call 911 immediately and provide CPR and administer a dose of Naloxone.



Call 911 and Administer Naloxone

Immediately after you check for signs of AD and overdose; calling 911 is essential. After calling for professional medical assistance, there is an opportunity to administer a life saving drug called Naloxone. **If the individual does not respond within 2-3 minutes of an initial dosage, provide a second dose.**

Naloxone, which is approved by the FDA has been utilized for years by EMS personnel to reverse opioid overdose and revive those affected. Naloxone can be given by an intranasal spray, intramuscular administration, under the skin, or by injection. Each of the different administration methods are effective in treating an overdose. However, based on the substance used in the suspected overdose (Fentanyl, Heroine, traditional opioids etc.) additional doses may be required.

After giving the individual a dose of Naloxone be sure to support the person's breathing. This support can be life-saving in itself and ensure the individual's brain is receiving oxygen. Rescue breathing involves the following key aspects:

- Check to ensure the airway is clear. Make sure nothing is in the person's mouth
- Place one hand on the chin, tilt their head back, and pinch their nose
- Place your mouth over their mouth to create a seal and begin by giving two slow breaths
- Watch for the chest to rise (not the stomach)
- After these initial steps, it is important to follow up with one breath every 5 seconds

Upon helping an individual with all of the above steps, the hours after overdose are just as critical. For roughly 4 hours after administration of Naloxone, signs and symptoms of opioid toxicity can continue. The effect of Naloxone is typically short lived, which is why calling 911 immediately is important so that they can be taken to an emergency room for professional medical treatment.

Education for Caregivers and Family Members

What Are Opioids?

Opioids are a broad group of pain-relieving drugs that bind to specific sectors of the brain. This class of prescription drugs include medications like: Morphine, Codeine, Methadone, Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, Fentanyl, Hydromorphone, and Buprenorphine; and also includes illicit substances such as Heroin and Fentanyl.

Through a diminished reception of pain by the brain, the body can feel relief from symptoms. However, opioids have other effects on the major system of our body. They can alter mood, slow breathing, and cause constipation. Long term effects can also limit locomotive function post-injury. Individuals with spinal cord injuries may utilize multiple opioids so these effects can be amplified. ¹¹

How Does Overdose Occur?

There are a variety of factors that can cause an overdose. For example, an overdose can occur when a patient deliberately intends to misuse a prescription, or uses an illicit substance like heroin with other potent opioids. Overdose is also prevalent when a patient takes an opioid as directed by their physician, but they make an error in dispensing the drug or the patient misunderstood the proper directions for its safe use.

The spinal cord injury population is uniquely positioned within the scope of the opioid epidemic facing the United States. In many cases community members often have no other choice to manage pain effectively. For many, their quality of life would be dramatically altered if they were offered limited access to opioids and other pain management drugs. While opioids can be used safely and effectively to treat pain, the AZSCIA believes that education on potential complications from abusing opioids either intentionally or inadvertently is essential.

High Risk Populations for Overdose Include Individuals

- With a history of substance abuse disorder
- With a history of long term opioid use
- Who take multiple opioids as part of a pain management regimen
- Who are taking higher doses of opioids (more than 50 MME/day)

It is advised that individuals who fall into these high risk groups work with their caregivers, family members, and friends to create an "overdose action plan". The plan should contain information on the signs of overdose, the location of Naloxone in their home, and directions on how to safely and effectively administer it. As a caregiver or family member, we encourage proactive planning and education to ensure that your loved one is safe. Our website (www.azspinal.org/opioid-response) has a comprehensive list of resources, and educational materials to help start the conversation.

Education for Caregivers and Family Members

Treating an Overdose

An opioid overdose is a serious life threatening medical event which requires immediate attention. The first natural step is to seek medical assistance immediately. Call 911 promptly if the signs of overdose (listed below) are being exhibited. Simply say, "Someone is unresponsive and is not breathing". Provide details about your location.

Signs of an Overdose:

The body is limp

The person is vomiting and/or making gurgling noises

Breathing appears to be slowed or stopped

Fingernails or lips have a blue or purple appearance

Signs of Overmedication:

Drowsiness or sleepiness

Low blood pressure/ or slowed heartbeat

Difficult being awakened from sleep

Slurred speech, intoxicated social behavior

What may appear to be overmedication can quickly become a dangerous medical event. Understanding Naloxone and its impact on a suspected overdose is extremely important.

What is Naloxone?

Naloxone is considered an antidote to opioid overdose. If administered appropriately, it effectively helps to block the opioid receptor sites and seeks to reverse the life threatening depression of the central nervous system. Typically, Naloxone is administered in emergency room settings. However, having Naloxone safely stored at home is encouraged for individuals who frequently take opioids.

Side Effects

While many medical professionals state that Naloxone typically has no side effects, we believe that there is potential for adverse reaction due to spinal cord injuries.

Continued...

Education for Caregivers and Family Members

Side Effects Include:

Changes in blood pressure

Rapid heartbeat

Shortness of breath

Dry cough

Wheezing

Spinal cord injuries create different biological responses to the above side effects. For those in the general population these may not be life threatening. For the SCI community changes in things like blood pressure or heart rate can trigger a potentially fatal response. We encourage education and training on utilizing Naloxone safely. As family and caregivers on the front line, it is important to equip yourself with the confidence to provide this life saving drug to your loved ones effectively.

Naloxone can only be effective if the individual has opioids in their system. It is not an effective treatment against benzodiazepines, barbiturates, GHB, or ketamine. In addition it is not effective against treating overdoses from stimulants like cocaine, methamphetamine, and MDMA. Naloxone does not contain the

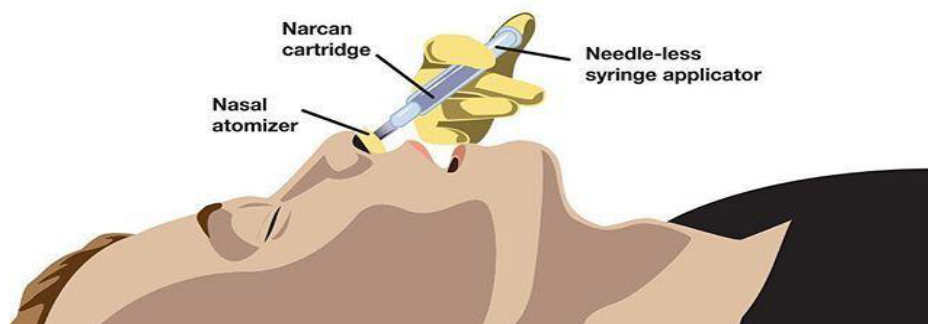
potential for abuse and it can be administered in the vein, muscle, under the skin, and even in the nose via nasal spray.

The AZSCIA encourages safety for our community when it comes to utilizing opioids for pain management. As part of any regimen, Naloxone should be stored in an accessible place at room temperature. Typical Naloxone shelf life is 12 to 18 months. If stored properly, it should be effective until at least the expiration date on the packaging. Keep all medicines in a safe place where children and pets cannot reach it.

Naloxone (Narcan)

What Is It? Naloxone is a medication that can reverse an overdose that is caused by an opioid drug such as prescription pain medication or heroin.

How Does It Work?
When administered during an overdose, naloxone blocks the effects of opioids on the brain and restores breathing within two to eight minutes to prevent death.



"PAIN DOESN'T HAVE TO KILL"

Recovery Support After Overdose

Survivors, caregivers, and family members all have unique roles to play after an over-dose. This life-changing event has emotional and physical implications. Many times there has been an emotional response that can show itself through embarrassment, guilt, anger, and gratitude. After an overdose, there is an opioid withdrawal that has to be dealt with as well. All of this can begin to make things feel overwhelming for the survivor and the support system intended to surround that individual. The AZSCIA believes that support services after overdose or OUD are essential in meeting the goal of improved quality of life.

It is important to remember that the individual going through recovery just experienced a major medical event. They are lucky to be alive. Feelings of guilt and judgment of family members is a common response. These feelings of hopelessness are a natural response and they deserve attention as well. The stigma associated with opioid abuse disorder can prevent family and friends from advocating for their loved ones. Even worse, it can cause the survivor to ignore the underlying issues that could be creating dangerous situations with opioids.

Find A Support Network

The strength of the disability community lies in its ability to form and establish a community. As with any health condition, it is not weak to admit that a person or family cannot deal with overdose and the secondary issues that can arise. These are sensitive conversations that do not happen easily or without hesitation. We encourage our community to find a peer mentor, meet with a substance use disorder specialist, and get connected through community-based organizations like the AZSCIA.

The Importance Peer Mentorship

The AZSCIA has maintained an active and growing list of peer mentors of different ages, levels of injury, and experiences after SCI. These unique viewpoints have proven to be invaluable to individuals in their journey. Not only do our peer mentors offer direct insight into life with an injury; they ensure consistent access to a community that can increase accountability in reaching goals.

Peer mentors are a natural resource and should be utilized after an overdose or after going through a detox program. Many of our peer mentors have dealt with substance abuse and have stories to tell. Findings suggest that peer mentorship, along with a treatment linkage and engagement are a promising approach to lasting recovery. Contact the AZSCIA to learn more about our peer mentor list. If you or someone you know would like to give back to the SCI community through peer mentorship please reach out to our team.¹¹

Recovery Support After Overdose

Seeking a Specialist

After an overdose, seeking the advice and opinion of specialists can help treat the disorder, as well as, the underlying issues that could have had an impact. If the survivor's underlying problem is pain, a pain management specialist may be the best course of action. If the underlying issue is an addiction, the patient should be referred to an addiction specialist. In either case ongoing counseling, coupled with a peer mentor as mentioned above, can help survivors manage their problems in a healthier and safer way.

Community-Based Programs

Much of the work around opioid use disorder and addiction involves the importance of prevention and treatment. Many times organizations and the programs they design fail to create an environment of success for when the dust has settled. What happens when a survivor goes home and falls back into the same routines and situations? Environmental factors, triggers, anxiety, depression, and cravings increase the risk of relapse substantially. Once a survivor successfully completes an in-patient rehab program there needs to be recovery supports in place that are made available to ensure lasting success. Common groups where you may find support include¹²:

- Faith-based organizations
- Neighborhood groups
- Government agencies
- Peer-to-peer recovery support groups like the AZSCIA opioid recovery support groups
- Virtual communities through telenetwork methods (Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc.)
- Community Mental Healthy Centers/Private Mental Health Centers

No matter where these support services are found, the message is clear. To ensure lasting success and recovery, the community is necessary for establishing accountability and creating a stigma-free environment to grow and push forward to an enhanced quality of life. No one can be expected to go through OUD recovery alone. We have provided a list of recovery resources curated to be a foundation for future success.

Curated SCI Community Resources

Prevention

Alternative Methods for Chronic Pain / Pain Management

Did you know there are alternative methods to manage your chronic pain? There are ways to manage/control your chronic pain that don't involve the use of prescription opioids. Some of these alternative treatment methods may actually prove to be more effective than opioid use and have fewer risks and side effects. ¹³

Disclaimer: These alternative treatments may have different results depending on the individual. Please contact your primary care physician for additional information or possible contraindications*

Exercise and Physical Therapy

Research has shown that regular exercise can ease pain long term by improving muscle tone, strength, and flexibility. Physical therapy has been shown to decrease inflammation, often a key cause of pain. This form of alternative pain management can re-educate the central nervous system and make it less sensitive to pain. ¹⁴



Meditation / Yoga

Meditation and Yoga has been shown in clinical trials to reduce chronic pain by 57 percent, and some experienced meditators can reduce it by over 90 percent. Meditation and Yoga help shift your focus to something quiet and calm, reducing inflammation and pain. ¹⁵

Acupuncture / Acupressure

A number of studies suggest that acupuncture as a complement to traditional management techniques, works particularly well on chronic pain such as back and neck pain, osteoarthritis/knee pain, and headache. It often reduces the incidence and severity of tension headaches and may prevent migraines.

Acupressure is an alternative medicine technique similar in principle to acupuncture. It is based on the concept of life energy which flows through "meridians" in the body. In treatment, physical pressure is applied to acupuncture points with the aim of clearing blockages in these meridians. ¹⁶

Curated SCI Community Resources



Massage

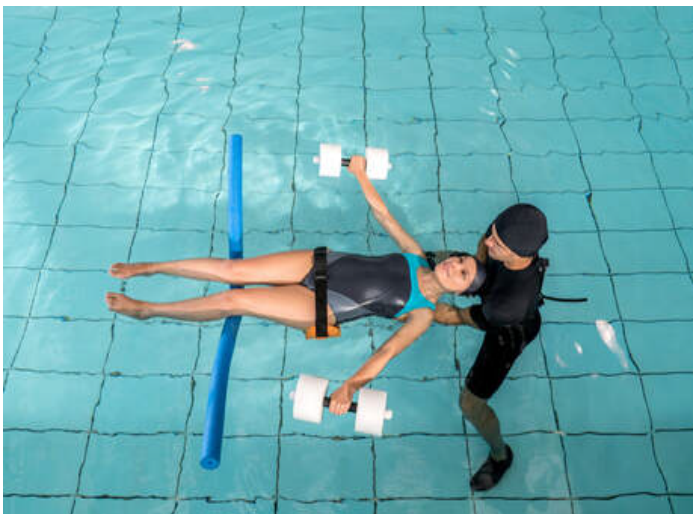
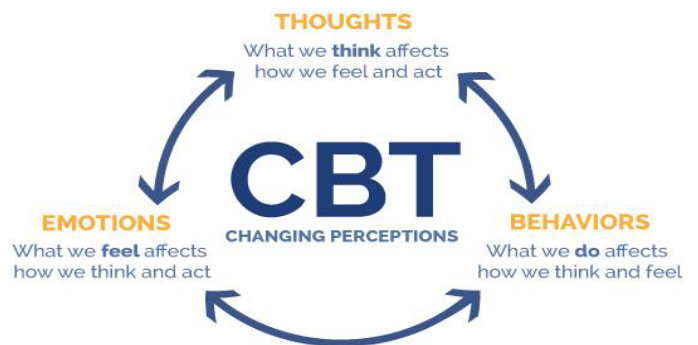
Massage therapy benefits include:

- Increased circulation
- Stronger mental health
- Improved range of motion
- Better muscle function and tone
- Increased self-efficacy

As a supplement to traditional pain management techniques, massage therapy can further quality of life outcomes for individuals with spinal cord injuries.¹⁷

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a psychological, goal-directed approach, in which patients learn how to modify physical, behavioral, and emotional triggers of chronic pain and stress. This has been proven to help patients change the way individuals view their pain.¹⁸



Aquatic Therapy / Wat-Su

Aquatic Therapy is a form of treatment that is performed in water for the purposes of physical rehabilitation, fitness, relaxation, and other therapeutic benefits. Most commonly, a qualified aquatic therapist gives guidance to a person receiving treatment. Aquatic therapy can also be self-guided.¹⁹

Wat-Su is a form of aquatic treatment that promotes rehabilitation and deep relaxation. Treatment involves a one-on-one session with a therapist that gently cradles, stretches, moves, and massages the individual. Wat-Su has profound benefits to individuals who experience chronic pain and helps with the effects of trauma, both physical and psycho-emotional, with therapeutic application for SCI or similar injuries.²⁰

Curated SCI Community Resources

Treatment Centers

The AZSCIA has worked with our community partners to locate accessible treatment centers. We believe that having an environment that supports daily living needs is essential to ensuring success throughout your journey. With that goal in mind, our team has thoroughly vetted their ability to provide the level of care required for members of the spinal cord injury community. These centers are organized by their location in the state. If you need assistance, please call our on-site navigator who can assist you with learning more about your options for treatment.

Company Name: Terros Health

Description: Terros Health is a nonprofit, integrated care provider with specialization in medical care, wellness interventions, trauma-informed mental health and addiction recovery. Our compelling purpose is to Inspire Change for Life, and last year we helped more than 50,000 Arizonans on the path to better health and an improved quality of life. Our mission is to create healthy communities while meeting our triple aim of excellent patient experience, quality health care outcomes and controlled health care costs.

Services Provided: IOP, Outpatient detox, Remote MAT treatment, telehealth counseling, group counseling.

Address: Multiple locations in the valley (website offers locations)

Website: <https://www.terroshealth.org/>

Payment method: AHCCCS, Call to verify insurance, private pay.

Accessibility: Accessible treatment centers, remote MAT treatment, Telehealth Counseling.

Company Name: Canyon Vista Recovery

Description: Canyon Vista Recovery uses an integrated approach to treat the whole person. Clients receive clinical, psychiatric and holistic care to ensure that the mind, body and soul is treated and ready for long-term recovery

Services Provided: Medical Detox, Long-term residential program and partial hospitalization program Phone: 888-409-6984

Address: 860 North Center Street

City/State/Zip: Mesa, Arizona 85201

Website: <https://canyonvista.com/>

Payment Method: This program is private pay and some private insurances. There is also a grant program to help with expenses. Call to verify insurance.

Accessibility: The site offers some disability parking spaces and the buildings are on a single level with wide doors in the general entrance. The doors do not have a touch pad for the doors. The rooms have accessible beds and the organization had access to hoist lifts and shower chairs. The bathrooms have roll in showers. Also, the organization is open to discuss the use of Caregivers on site to assist people with a higher level disability.

Curated SCI Community Resources

Company Name: Crossroads Inpatient Red Mountain Location

Description: Crossroads is an Arizona Department of Health Services licensed substance abuse treatment provider with proven expertise in serving addicted men, women, and Veterans through the provision of high quality, successful, and affordable residential and outpatient recovery programs.

Services Provided: Men's Residential Treatment Program, MAT Treatment

Phone: 602-263-5242

Address: 143 S Center St, Mesa, AZ

Website: <https://thecrossroadsinc.org>

Payment method: AHCCCS, Private Insurance, Private Pay, Call to verify insurance

Accessibility: No skilled nursing provided. Two (2) male beds available for SCI. Shower is roll in and has a small lip. Access to shower chair. Lunch area and group rooms are accessible. The office entrance has a small step and lip to enter the office. The organization is aware of the step challenge and will be able to accommodate. May bring caregiver for morning and evening needs. Accessible parking. Transportation provided if needed.

Company Name: Crossroads Inpatient Extension Location

Description: Crossroads is an Arizona Department of Health Services licensed substance abuse treatment provider with proven expertise in serving addicted men, women, and Veterans through the provision of high quality, successful, and affordable residential and outpatient recovery programs.

Services Provided: Women's Residential Treatment Program, MAT Treatment

Phone: 602-263-5242

Address: 244 N Extension Road, Mesa, AZ

Website: <https://thecrossroadsinc.org>

Payment method: AHCCCS, Private Insurance, Private Pay Call to verify insurance

Accessibility: No skilled nursing provided. Two (2) Female beds available for SCI. Shower is roll-in, access to shower chair. Lunch area and group rooms are accessible. Multiple disability parking spots. May bring a care-giver for morning and evening needs. Transportation provided if needed.

Company Name: Stepstone Connect

Description: Stepstone Connect is a national teletherapy IOP and aftercare provider based in Woods Cross, UT. We also provide individual sessions for clients who are just starting their journey in recovery. We are licensed for primary mental health and primary substance abuse, and have clients who fall into only one, or both of these categories. We're currently contracted with BCBS, First Health, Aetna, and Tricare, and can also do single-case agreements or out-of-network coverage for other insurers. Our groups and individual sessions meet via our encrypted and 100% HIPPA compliant video platform, and are available anywhere the client has access to the Internet and a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Clients can sign up for one of our groups or individual sessions on our website at <https://stepstoneconnect.com/scheduling/> They can also call me directly at (385) 321-8119 and I can walk them through the process and answer any questions. The program is especially ideal for clients in the following situations: Privacy concerned Physical disability Transportation difficulties Rural/limited access at home Time limitations Working professionals.

Services Provided: First Responders, Recovery & Treatment, Family Counseling, Mental Health

Phone: 435-496-4134

Address: Based out of Utah, but is available nationwide via Internet

Currently we cover AZ, NM, WA, OR, UT, ID, CO, AK, IN, and FL

Website: <https://stepstoneconnect.com/>

Payment method: Tricare, Private Insurance and Private Pay

Accessibility: Will need Internet services and access to a computer, iPad, or smartphone with the ability to Skype or use other communication applications.

Curated SCI Community Resources

Recovery

After the treatment process for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), it is essential to have a support system in place for recovery. The AZSCIA recognizes this and has worked with our support groups, peer mentors, and community organizations to ensure there is a community of people there to support you.

Whether you are looking for a support group, healthy living alternative programs, or a peer mentor to help you stay the course; the AZSCIA is here to help.

Opioid Reduction Program:

Presented by: Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center and the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association.

Research by The National Institute of Health (NIH), has shown that regular exercise can ease chronic pain. Exercise releases endorphins, which is our body's natural pain-killers. Exercise has been proposed as an intervention for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD).

Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center's '**Opioid Reduction Program**' is a program that provides treatment and recovery support for individuals going through Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). The individual will receive a complimentary membership to the fitness center, along with curated classes to build a sense of community and accountability to one another as they work the program together.

If you are currently in treatment, recovery, or have ever experienced OUD in the past, this program is for you! The Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association and Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center are working together to combat the OUD epidemic in Arizona. We are dedicated to building a healthy community for individuals with disabilities, their families, and caregivers.



You can sign up today at www.azspinal.org

Continued...

Curated SCI Community Resources

"WeCovery" Support Group:

The Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association is committed to building a healthy community for individuals with SCI and their families. With that in mind, we understand that chronic pain may be a way of life for many people who suffer from past injuries. The response of the medical community traditionally has been to prescribe opioid medications to help deal with this pain. However, opioids are very addictive and can affect one's quality of life after pro-longed use. With this understanding, we invite you to come to our first support group meet-ing for individuals who have struggled with addiction, are currently in treatment/recovery or have overcome their addiction and want to help others.

"WeCovery" is a support group for individuals to share their thoughts and support each other without judgment or criticism. Meetings take place on the 3rd Monday of every month. The meetings will be held virtually through Zoom. Please visit our website at www.azspinal.org/recovery for the meeting link.



All of the success stories witnessed through AZSCIA of people with a disability and OUD were achieved through self-perseverance. This is a true statement to the tenacity and strength of these people who deserve the support of our society.

Moving Forward/Efforts to Combat OUD:

In our attempts to develop resources for the SCI community to address opioid use disorder (OUD) and chronic pain, it has become evident that almost all inpatient substance use programs typically would send anyone with a disability that could not care for themselves without a caregiver to skilled nursing facility. The skilled nursing services we found do not offer an OUD support program within the skilled nursing system while utilizing the skilled nursing services. This is a gap in our health care system to supply adequate and relevant services to high level disabilities with chronic pain.

Our goal is to find and develop a bridge to include the disability community in the rehabilitation system. AZSCIA visited sites to negotiate and work with organizations to create a workable solution to help individuals with disabilities that needed limited caregiver support to participate with OUD rehabilitation programs. It is not ideal and does not address the need to develop a more inclusive rehabilitation system for OUD and people with a high need for skilled nursing due to a high level disability. At this point our organization recommend creating alliances with rehabilitation organizations and state organizations to work towards a more encompassing solution for people with disabilities.

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