

WEIGHT CONTROL

for greater mobility and well-being

Many people with physical impairments gain weight. One of the reasons is that a decline in muscle mass and lower levels of physical activity means the body will use less energy (calories).



COMMON WEIGHT TREND AFTER A SPINAL CORD INJURY

- Weight loss approx. 10% or 5-10 kg over the first few months
- Overweight already within the first two years ⁽¹⁾
- Rule of thumb: a healthy weight is lower after a spinal cord injury than it was before the injury, due to the decline in muscle mass ⁽²⁾

1) Crane et al. Weight gain following spinal cord injury: a pilot study. J Spinal Cord Med. 2011 Mar; 34(2): 227-232.
2) Laughton et al. Lowering body mass index cutoffs better identifies obese persons with spinal cord injury. Spinal Cord. 2009 Oct;47(10):757-62.



ADAPT YOUR ENERGY INTAKE TO YOUR NEW SITUATION

- Smaller portions ⁽³⁾
- Increase the amount of vegetables and salad you eat
- Reduce sugar, especially sweet drinks. Drink water when thirsty ⁽⁴⁾
- Avoid snacking

3) Bigford G, Nash MS. Nutritional Health Considerations for Persons with Spinal Cord Injury. Topics in spinal cord injury rehabilitation. 2017;23(3):188-206.
4) Nordiska Näringsrekommendationerna (NNR 2012)

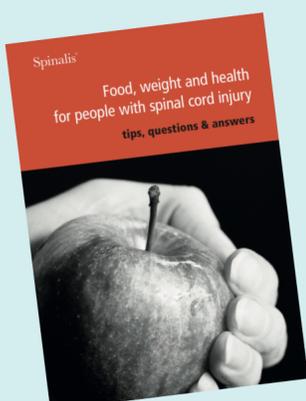


MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

- Greater mobility and independence
- Greater well-being and reduced risk for illness ⁽⁵⁾
- No need to change to a wider wheelchair
- Physical activity, exercise and training helps maintain a healthy weight ⁽⁶⁾

5) Bauman, Spungen. Metabolic Changes in Persons After Spinal Cord Injury. Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Clinics of North America. 2000;11(1):109-40.
6) Holmlund et al. Energy expenditure in people with motor-complete paraplegia. Spinal cord. 2017;55(8):774-81.

Weigh yourself regularly. You will discover any trends and it will be easier to adjust your energy intake.



Food, weight and health for people with spinal cord injury can be downloaded for free from www.spinalis.se.

For more lifestyle inspiration, download the book **The art of healthy living with physical impairments** from the same website, also for free.

"Being overweight snuck up on me. Nothing was directly visible, but I felt heavier and my transfers were more difficult. Now I've lost weight, and I feel stronger and lighter than I have in ages."

Peter, age 36, living with spinal cord injury for 13 years