

# ` Quick Review of Model System Research

## Treatments That Are Perceived to be Helpful for Non-Therapeutic Pain After Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury: A Multicenter Cross-Sectional Survey

### What is the study about?

### This study aims to identify treatments that people with traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) used for non-neuropathic pains (nonNeuP) and how they rated the helpfulness of these treatments. Non-neuropathic pain is pain felt in body tissue, or musculoskeletal pain, such as fibromyalgia, degenerative arthiritis, or lower back pain. About 70% of individuals with SCI have ongoing pain. Over half of these individuals feel that nonNeuP interferes with their activities of daily living.

### What did the study find?

This study found that heat therapy, aerobic exercise, massage, and body position adjustment were the most helpful non-pharmacological treatments for overall nonNeuP locations (helpful in 71–80% of treated pains). The most helpful pharmacologic treatments for overall nonNeuP locations were found to be NSAIDs/aspirin, acetaminophen, opioids, and cannabinoids (helpful in 77-89% of treated pains). Perceived helpfulness of treatments varied by pain locations, which may be due to different mechanisms underlying pains in different locations.

### Who participated in the study?

There were 391 participants who were at least 18 years old and 1-year post-traumatic SCI, and who were previously enrolled in one of the six Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems centers.

### How was the study conducted?

This was a cross-sectional survey study. Researchers used a telephone survey that asked participants about pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatments that were used in the last 12 months for their three worst pains and perceived helpfulness.

### How can people use the results?

### Individuals with SCI and their families can use the results of this study to better understand the helpfulness of different pain-specific treatments for nonNeuP. Practitioners can use these results to select pain-specific treatments for patients with nonNeuP.

### Reference

Tsai, C. Y., Bryce, T. N., Delgado, A. D., Mulroy, S., MacIntyre, B., Charlifue, S., & Felix, E. R. (2021). Treatments that are perceived to be helpful for non-therapeutic pain after traumatic spinal cord injury: A multicenter cross-sectional survey. *Spinal Cord, 59*(5): 520-528. [https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33742116/#:~:text=Heat%20therapy%2C%20aerobic%20exercise%2C%20massage,80%25%20of%20treated%20pains]

**Disclaimer**

The contents of this quick review were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DP0082). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this quick review do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.