



Spinal Connection

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Spinal Connection is published quarterly by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission.

1501 N. University Ave., Suite 470, Little Rock, AR 72207

Spinal Connection is an official publication of



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Arkansas Spinal Cord Injury/Disability Conference

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission is pleased to announce that it will hold its biennial spinal cord injury/disability conference on **Friday, September 7, 2018**.

The conference will be held in the Grand Hall of the Campus Center Building on the Pulaski Technical College North Little Rock campus located at 3000 West Scenic Drive.



The 2018 Arkansas Spinal Cord Injury/Disability Conference is presented by Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission and Baptist Health.

This year's conference features informative presentations by regional and model system experts and exhibits from national, regional, and local exhibitors.

This conference will offer exciting presenters speaking on topics relevant to those living with a spinal cord injury or disability as well as every level of healthcare professional. Topics include:

- Spinal Cord Injury (SCI): Pitfalls per Patient and Primary Care Physician Perspectives, Part 2
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Approach to Myelopathy, Encephalopathy, and Neuropathy (M.E.N.)
- Medical Marijuana
- Therapeutic Recreation
- A Medic's Journey from Provider to Patient

Registration opens in Summer 2018 and will cost \$60 for healthcare professionals, \$30 for students, and there is **no cost for ASCC clients and family members/caretakers**. The conference will be

Contact Information

Phone: (800) 459-1517

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Donations

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission accepts tax-deductible donations to support ASCC.

Send your donation to:
AR Spinal Cord Commission
1501 North University Ave.,
Suite 470
Little Rock, AR 72207

Acknowledgments

The ASCC would like to acknowledge donations made to the Commission...

In Memory of Ronnie Brown:

- Employees of NLR Radiology (Kristen Langson, Suzanna, Felicia, Chelsea, Tamara, Barb, Kelsey, and Rashonda)
- Cathy Cranston, Leshia Singleton, Jessica Tabor, and Louis Trotter

In Memory of Grover Evans:

- Ann and Charles Ford

In Memory of Ronald Pruet:

- Southside Community Church (two donations)

In Memory of Hugene Wooley:

- Southwest Power Pool
- Members of Jim Mochen's Sunday School Class
- Deborah Alexander

held on Pulaski Technical College's North Little Rock Campus (3000 West Scenic Drive) in the Campus Center Building - Grand Hall. For more information about the conference program, continuing education credit or contact hours, please contact ascc@arkansas.gov.

From the Director ~ Terra Patrom

Resource Review

Since this is the last article for the State Fiscal Year (ending June 30th), I thought it was important to overview some of the information and resources we have touched on in past newsletters.

Van Accessible Parking Act (Act 799)

Reminder to not let the word 'Van' confuse you since a van is NOT required. What is required?

The vehicle authorized to park in the Van Accessible Parking space must be used to transport a person with limited to no use of his or

her legs and uses a wheelchair, a three or 4-wheel scooter, a four-wheeled walker with a seat, or a similar device. The purpose is clear since the use any of these types of medical devices requires the extra space created within the Van accessible parking space to open the vehicle doors wider for transfer and maneuvering.

The law went into effect November 13, 2017. You need to visit your local healthcare provider to obtain certification that shows you meet the requirement to use the Van Accessible Parking space.

This will allow you to obtain the Van Accessible Parking decal from your local Revenue Department to affix in the left side window of your license plate. There will be a sticker for the placard/hang-tag as well. This is important since enforcement of the law goes into effect on January 1, 2019. The new certification form is available under "Quick Links" on the home page of the ASCC website:

<http://ascc.ar.gov/>.



TAP iPad/iPhone Program

Originally brought to you in the Winter 2016 issue as a Pilot Program, the TAP iPad Program has now been implemented



as part of the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) service to provide wireless devices that can improve the ability of qualifying Arkansans with disabilities to use telecommunication and communication tools such as email, phone, text, or relay services. Since that time, the addition of iPhones has been included as part of the service provided.

To find out more information on services and/or how to apply, please contact the staff at TAP at 1 (800) 981-4463 or visit their website at <http://arktap.org/>.

TRIUMPH Call Center

TELE-Rehabilitation Interventions through University based Medicine for Prevention and Health... Wow! That's a mouthful.

I can understand the need for the acronym – TRIUMPH. We first brought you a full article on the purpose of the TRIUMPH



Call Center in the Spring 2016 issue. It has been in service since 2014. The TRIUMPH Call Center provides 24-hour, 7-days per week coverage to assist you, your family and/or caregivers, as well as your healthcare providers access to professionals to answer your questions or concerns related to your Spinal Cord Injury/Disability (SCI/D). The TRIUMPH Call Center staff provide on-the-spot triage and consultation at no charge to you as part of their program. If you or a healthcare provider have questions about medications or medication interactions; questions on whether you need to go to the ER because you're experiencing something new and/or different; have issues with finding a specialist; or you are having bowel, bladder, spasticity issues - just to name a few things they cover - you can phone the Call Center staff to obtain assistance from healthcare specialists that have experience working with SCI/D patient populations. They also provide educational videos on SCI/D for you and your family and/or caregivers at <http://atrp.arkansas.gov/resources/education/>. If you are a healthcare professional that would like to learn more about SCI/D, guidelines related to SCI/D are available at <https://pmr.uams.edu/telemedicine/>.

Spina Bifida Camp

Camp is an awesome opportunity for kids between the ages of 6-16 to learn and/or enhance their independent living skills and share their experience with other kids with similar experiences. It is a great week of learning, experimenting, and networking so they can grow their voices. The week-long



camp includes activities such as archery, swimming, canoeing, fishing, arts and crafts, and an accessible adventure challenge rope course.

Camp applications are due by May 16th! You can turn in your applications for camp to hold your child's camp slot, then follow-up, to obtain the additional medical documentation. Space is limited - so get your applications in as soon as possible.

New Staff at ASCC

Tracy Deeds

Tracy Deeds joined the ASCC Staff in January of 2018. She has lived in Arkansas since moving here in 2010 from Oklahoma. She earned her Bachelor's Degree from Oklahoma State University in Sociology and Psychology, and formerly worked as a Disability Examiner for the State of Oklahoma prior to deciding to stay at home and raise her two daughters.

During those years, she volunteered extensively at school, church and civic activities, as well as working as a temp, or part time. Her husband's job in finance/accounting has moved them to several states, and the extensive travel that was required of him, allowed them to utilize his frequent flyer miles and travel a bit. Her favorite trip was spending a week in Scotland, and hiking on the Isle of Skye. The whole family are certified scuba divers, and when the opportunity arises, she hopes to go on many more family adventures with clear water, beautiful coral reefs, and lots of fish.

In her spare time Tracy enjoys spending time with family and friends, cooking, baking, entertaining, and traveling. She also enjoys listening to her youngest daughter Sarah's band play on the weekends at local pubs and traveling to Tennessee to see her older daughter Mary, who is planning on returning to college in the fall.



Chris Tharpe

Chris Tharpe joined ASCC in January of 2018. He is from Crossett, Arkansas, but attended high school at Hamburg High, where he played football. During his senior year of high school, he joined the Army. After returning from training, he attended college at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation Services. Chris moved to Little Rock during his senior semester of college for his internship. He completed his internship at the Little Rock office of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Formerly, Chris worked as an Independent Assessor giving assessments to individuals with disabilities. Prior to that, he worked as a Residential Treatment Counselor for adolescents, where he helped patients achieve wellness and independence. He is currently a member of the United States Army Reserve and is completing the last months of his initial 8-year contract. Chris indicated his work at ASCC is extraordinarily meaningful work to him as he has a passion for assisting people with their needs and establishing independence. He feels people shouldn't have limits on life. He said he understands that sometimes something as simple as a conversation, advocacy, or guidance can change an individual's life.



In his spare time, Chris enjoys working out, playing video games, traveling, and fishing. Most of all, in his spare time he enjoys spending time being a father to his 3-year-old daughter Carter. Please join us in welcoming Chris Tharpe to our ASCC family!

A Planned Bowel Program

Medically Speaking

An injured spinal cord impedes the messages from parts of the digestive system to and from the brain, so that the body's processes for storing and removing stool from the body are no longer under voluntary control. We call this a neurogenic bowel, and it means that bowel movements require time, thought, and planning to avoid accidents and prevent other complications such as bowel impactions, autonomic dysreflexia and pressure sores.

Before a spinal cord injury, when stool moved into the rectum the anal sphincter contracted and made the person aware of its presence, so the person could voluntarily contract the anal sphincter until a toilet could be found. Once a toilet was found, appropriate nerve signals were then sent to relax the anal sphincter and contract abdominal muscles to have a bowel movement. A spinal cord injury slows down peristalsis (an automatic wave like action that propels stool through the gastrointestinal tract), impairs sensation of stool, prevents abdominal muscle control, and prevents control of the rectal sphincter.

After a spinal cord injury there are two types of neurogenic bowel - either an Upper Motor Neuron (UMN) bowel with spastic bowel, characterized by excessive motor contractions and tone, or a Lower

Thomas Kiser, MD



Motor Neuron (LMN) bowel, with flaccid bowel, characterized by low tone. In an UMN bowel, the goal is to maintain soft firm stools, but in a LMN bowel the goal is hard small stools. In both, the goal is a controlled bowel movement (BM) on a routine basis. In an UMN bowel the spasticity is used to stimulate a BM with digital stimulation or a suppository. In a LMN bowel there is a loss of peristalsis in the descending colon and no anal sphincter tone, so stool passes freely out of the anal sphincter. The goal in a LMN bowel is to produce well-formed stools and keep the rectal vault clear by frequent rectal checks and removal of stool. A bowel program is a plan to reach these goals and to regain control of your bowel function after a spinal cord injury. Bowel programs have several components tailored to the individual: medication, rectal stimulation/evacuation, and diet/fluid intake.

Oral medications, like senna or dulcolax tablets, are used to change the stool consistency or to modify how fast your stool moves through the colon. Suppositories or stimulant medications like milk of magnesia are used to stimulate peristalsis in the descending colon in UMN bowel and produce a scheduled bowel movement. Medication may also be needed to prevent the potentially dangerous complication of autonomic dysreflexia, which is a sudden, major rise in blood pressure caused by pain below the level of the spinal cord injury. Autonomic dysreflexia can occur in injuries at T6 or lower, and may be triggered by stool in the rectum or any rectal stimulation. You can use a numbing agent such as lidocaine ointment/gel to minimize the response or take a blood pressure lowering agent such as nitroglycerin (tablet, paste or spray) or a blood pressure pill such as hydralazine or clonidine.

Rectal stimulation (a gloved lubricated finger inserted in the rectum to relax the anal sphincter) is another way to turn on peristalsis in the descending colon to start the process. Manually clearing the rectal vault is necessary for LMN Bowel problems. Manual clearing is done by inserting one or 2 fingers in the rectum to break up the stool in order to get the stool out of the rectum. You will need to establish a good routine to train the bowels. Performing a rectal check at the time of each in/out catheter for the bladder can help when dealing with LMN bowel.

Our sincere condolences to the friends and family of...

.....

Peggy K. Dickson	03/24/16
Jesse Grinder	09/06/16
Peter Beasley	09/27/16
Leola M. Martinez	02/11/17
Thomas C. Duke	09/13/17
Larry M. Tiner	10/15/17
Gayla J. Sydoriak	10/23/17
Jerris Wells	10/24/17
Larry Porchia	11/16/17
Clayton E. Liles	11/28/17
Jimmie D. Gossett	12/06/17
April D. Bates	12/09/17
Joseph L. Olien	12/10/17
Stephen W. Kerisey	12/17/17
David L. McEuen	12/23/17
Connie M. Richardson	12/26/17
Ronnie L. Brown	12/27/17
James Thompson	12/29/17
Amos J. Cason	12/31/17
Andre L. Lewis	01/04/18
Rose M. Bartsch	01/13/18
Freddie T. Castleman	01/14/18
Ronald S. Pruet	01/16/18
Phyllis L. Henry	01/17/18
Lester Perry	01/17/18
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Floyd W. Hoke	01/24/18
John R. Bennett	01/27/18
J. Loomis Abbott	01/29/18
Hugene F. Wooley	02/12/18
Wanda S. Sentell	02/21/18
Robert J. Sheppard	03/06/18
Stanley B. Andrews	03/07/18
Richard C. Collins	03/18/18

Diet and activity also play a big role in bowel function and management. Fiber is important. Foods that are high in fiber can absorb liquids and help increase stool bulk, which makes it easier for stool to move through the colon. High-fiber foods are beans, fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grain cereals or breads. It's best to get the dietary fiber you need from a variety of food sources. A starting goal is at least 15 grams of fiber each day, but it is important to increase your fiber intake slowly to allow your bowel to adjust. Activity such as abdominal massage in clockwise motion or body movement (such as shadow boxing or w/c push-ups) can help move stool in the colon towards the rectum.

There are no foods that consistently cause diarrhea in everyone. Some people find fatty, spicy, or greasy foods cause diarrhea. Other people report that the caffeine found in coffee, tea, cocoa, chocolate, or soft drinks causes diarrhea. If you are lactose intolerant, drinking milk or eating ice cream can be a cause of diarrhea. Diarrhea-causing bacteria can contaminate different foods as well. Gas in the digestive tract may cause uncomfortable feelings of fullness, bloating, and pain. If you're having problems with too much gas, you may want to cut back or cut out foods associated with gas. These include beans, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, onions, and turnips. Medication such as simethicone may be of some benefit.

Fluid intake is one of the keys to a good bowel program. You need to drink plenty of fluids every day to keep your stool soft and prevent constipation. Drinking enough is especially important if you're eating more fiber. A good guideline is 64 ounces of water a day. If you exercise or the weather is hot, drink more fluids. However, some people may need to limit how much they drink because of their bladder program. Drinks like coffee, tea, cocoa, or soft drinks contain caffeine and caffeine can increase fluid loss through increasing urine production. You may want to keep caffeinated drinks to a minimum.

No single bowel program is right for everyone. Every person with a spinal cord injury has a different diet, activity, routine, need for medication, and life schedule that regular bowel care has to fit. By working with your healthcare provider and developing a bowel management program, you can begin a normal schedule for passing stool and avoid potentially serious complications.

**Have a medical
question?**

**Experiencing
issues and
need immediate
answers?**

TRIUMPH Help Line

1-855-767-6983

FREE 24 / 7 Access

**Help & Information
for Arkansans with Spinal Cord
Injury & Healthcare Providers**



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Annual Trap Shooting for a Cause



The Arkansas Spinal Cord Foundation (ASCF) is hosting the annual Trap Shoot on **April 21, 2018** at

the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation Shooting Sports Complex in Jacksonville, AR. All proceeds support ASCF services and benefit adults and children with spinal cord injuries and disabilities.

You can find the **2018 Trap Shoot Registration Form** at <https://tinyurl.com/trapshoot18>.

