



Support Groups/Self-Help Groups/Peer Mentoring



Support groups differ from self-help groups in that they are led by professional therapists rather than group members. (Definition from Inside MS April-June 2004 p. 53.) Please note that not everyone recognizes this distinction and you should inquire as to the credentials of the person leading the group if you need professional help. You may encounter other terms for these groups also such as peer mentoring, peer coaching, peer support, etc.

The Reeve Foundation has a Peer and Family Support Program in which Peer Mentors are certified by the Reeve Foundation. If you are interested in being mentored by a

Reeve Foundation Peer Mentor, please go to the Reeve website:
www.ChristopherReeve.org/Peer.

Web Resources

American Stroke Association: Starting a Stroke Support Group

<https://www.stroke.org/en/help-and-support/support-group-leader-resources/starting-a-support-group>

Caregiver.com: Starting and Running a Caregiver Support Group

https://caregiver.com/articles/starting_running_support_group/

Caregiver.com: Why Do We Attend Support Groups?

<https://caregiver.com/articles/why-attend-support-groups/>

Facing Disability: For Families Facing Spinal Cord Injuries

www.facingdisability.com

a support group for family members of someone with an SCI, also offers peer counseling to people with SCI

Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)

<https://www.mda.org/>

National Headquarters

1016 W. Jackson Blvd., #1073

Chicago, IL 60607

Phone: 800-572-1717, 888-ASK-MDA1 (833-275-6321)

Email: ResourceCenter@mda.org

MDA offers services such as educational webinars, on-demand learning, community activities, support groups, peer connection opportunities, 30-minute video calls to discuss resources and support needed, MDA summer camp for children, partnerships with specialty clinics and clinicians, a National Resource Center, fundraising activities/events, and information about the latest research. For more information on their support groups, please visit: <https://www.mda.org/care/community-groups>.

New Mobility magazine: Starting A Support Group August 2016 issue

<https://newmobility.com/starting-support-group/>

Synapse

<https://synapsenational.wixsite.com/synapse>

Synapse offers support groups for individuals with brain injuries. Synapse was founded in 2016 at Stanford University.

Tragedy Assistance Programs for Survivors (TAPS)

www.TAPS.org

3101 Wilson Blvd., Third Floor

Arlington, VA 22201

Phone: 800-959-TAPS (8277)

Email: info@taps.org

TAPS is a non-profit organization that offers compassionate care to all those grieving the death of a loved one serving in the Armed Forces. Since 1994, TAPS has provided comfort and hope 24 hours a day, seven days a week through a national peer support network and connection to grief resources, all at no cost to surviving families and loved ones.

United Spinal Association: How to Start Support or Discussion Group Fact Sheet
<https://unitedspinal.org/how-to-start-a-support-group/>

Virtual Support Groups

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation's Peer & Family Support Program virtual support groups.

<https://www.heypeers.com/organizations/99#list>

The Reeve Foundation offers 3 virtual support groups: one for caregivers of people living with paralysis, one for quadriplegics, and one for paraplegics. Please go to the above link to register for a meeting. There is no charge to attend. Some are hosted by people living with paralysis while others are hosted by social workers.

Vanderbilt University's Critical Illness, Brain Dysfunction and Survivorship Center virtual support group for caregivers of people living with severe brain injury

Email: claire.burdick@vumc.org

This free education and peer support group is moderated by Vanderbilt University Medical Center mental health providers and is open to individuals in the U.S. who have been providing care to someone with a disorder of consciousness (DOC). A DOC is a condition that follows a severe brain injury. People with DOC have not recovered the ability to communicate or make decisions for themselves. They require a caregiver to assist with all or most physical, emotional, and cognitive needs. The group will meet via Zoom on Tuesdays from 4 pm to 5:15 pm Central. The following is a link to more information and to gather the contact info of those who are interested in participating: https://link.edgipilot.com/s/41db7ccd/0adiIPR1NU_QSMbyqtaDiw?u=https://redcap.vumc.org/surveys/?s=AK9M9JY7LCPJJPE

Support Groups by State

ARIZONA

East Valley Support Group (COMPASS)

Granite Reef Sr. Ctr.
1700 N. Granite Reef Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85257
Phone: 602-241-1006
Contact: Pauline Staples
Every 3rd Friday of the month 2:00PM – 4:30PM

Flagstaff Support Group

Northern Arizona Health Care Training Center
1200 N. Beaver St.
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
Phone: 928-527-8567
Contact: Al White
Every 1st Tuesday of the month 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Grupo de apoyo en Español

Gentiva Rehab Without Walls, 7227 N 16th St #107, Phoenix, Arizona,
Phone: 480-390-5240
Contact: Diane Hendrix
El grupo de apoyo en Español para personas que tienen trauma cerebral y lesión a la columna. Este grupo hace actividades de diversión y actividades educativas.
Cuando: ¡Cada segundo sábado del mes! Por favor llamar si usted quiere atender

Prescott Support Group

Mountain Valley Regional Rehabilitation
3700 W. Windsong Dr.
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314
Phone: 928-759-8800
Contact: Jo Crawford
First Thursday of every month at 6:00 PM

SCI Women Support Group

Disability Empowerment Center
5025 E. Washington St., Suite 110
Phoenix, AZ 85034-7437
Phone: (602) 507-4209
Contact: Donna Powers
Every 2nd Tuesday of the month 6:30 PM- 8:00 PM

Wheel Life Group Support Group at Dignity Health St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center

This support group is part of the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association and meets the first Wed. of each month at 5:45 pm in the Sontag Pavillion, 350 W. Thomas Rd. Phoenix AZ 85013. Please contact Tammy Abbott-Thiel at 602-406-3421 for more information.

CALIFORNIA**Leon S. Peter's Rehabilitation Center, Community Regional Medical Center**

2823 Fresno St.
Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 559-459-2789
Contact: Lynne Jarman
Meets 3rd Wed of every other month

Tri-county Independent Living Center

139 5th St.
Eureka, CA 95501
Phone: 707-445-8404

Bay Area Spinal Cord Injury Peer Group (Berkeley)

www.facebook.com/groups/scipeersupport/
Ed Roberts Campus
3075 Adeline St.
Berkeley, CA 94703
Phone: 415-205-3882; 510-868-9175 (Contact Tom Shankle)
Email: spinalnetwork@everydayabilities.org
Meets 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:00-8:30pm.

Napa Spinal Cord Injury Network

www.facebook.com/Napaspinalcordinjurynetwork?ref=hl
Community Outreach Center
3448 Villa Lane, Suite 102
Napa, CA 94558
Phone: 707-299-9123 (Contact Jim Burnett)
Email: Jburnettdd@aol.com
Meets last Friday of the month, 1:00-2:00pm.

NorCal SCI's list of support groups

<https://norcalsci.org/support-groups>
NorCal SCI also offers family support groups for the family and friends of people living with spinal cord injury. <https://norcalsci.org/family-support>

Placerville Mobility Support Group

Meeting Place: Round Table Pizza
3975 Missouri Flat Rd.
Placerville CA 95667
Contact: Lynn Murray
Phone: 530-295-7620
Email: lynnmurray2684@att.net
This group is the first California chapter of the United Spinal Association. Their mission is to improve the physical, mental and emotional well-being of persons with some form of ambulatory impairment. Meets 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 pm.

San Francisco Bay Area Spinal Network

www.facebook.com/groups/scipeersupport/
Independent Living Resources Center of SF
825 Howard St
San Francisco, CA 94103
Phone: 415-205-3882 (Contact Tom Shankle); 510-868-9175
Email: spinalnetwork@everydayabilities.org
Meets 4th Thursday of the month, 6:00-8:30pm.

Santa Clara Valley Medical Center's Peer Support Network

<https://scvmc.scvh.org/health-care-services/rehabilitation/services/peer-support/spinal-cord-injury-peer-support-program>

751 South Bascom Ave.

San Jose, CA 95128

Phone: 408-885-5000

They offer various support groups for people with spinal cord injuries--including one for women and one for the newly injured and their families.

SCI Peer Support Group of Solano & Contra Costa Counties

<https://www.ilrsc.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Public-Figure/SCI-Peer-Support-Group-of-Solano-Contra-Costa-Counties-207904149302258/>

1850 Gateway Blvd, Suite 120

Concord, CA 94520

Phone: 925-363-7293 (Contact Michael Hopfe)

Email: Michaelh@ilrsc.org

Spinal Network

<https://www.spinal-network.org/>

1835 A S. Centre City Parkway #197

Escondido, CA 92025

Phone: 951-775-2561

This network provides programs, resources, and services to the disability community in San Diego and W. Riverside County. They promote community integration, participation, and independence for wheelchair users by providing assistive technology tools and community and peer support.

Roseville Area SCI Peer Support Group

6 Medical Plaza Dr.

Roseville, CA 95661

Phone: 916-872-3083 (Contact Todd Boyer)

Email: Toddboyer@comcast.net

Meets 1st Thursday of the month, 6:30-8:00pm.

Sacramento SCI Support Group

SCI-FIT Building

2404 Del Paso Road

Sacramento, CA 95834

Phone: 209-200-7153 (Contact Charlene Vine)

Email: charvine@sbcglobal.net

Meets 1st Wednesday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm.

UC Davis Hospital SCI Peer Support

2315 Stockton Blvd., Room 0343

Sacramento, CA 95817

Davis Tower Room 1704

Phone: 916-816-6347 (Contact Holly Bleasdale)

Email: hdbleasdale@ucdavis.edu

Meets every Wednesday, 3:00-4:00pm.

Santa Clara County: SCI Connections

Bascom Community Center

751 S. Bascom Ave

San Jose, CA 95128

Phone: 408-793-6433 (Contact Robert Medel)

Email: Robert.Medel@hhs.sccgov.org

Meets 3rd Thursday of the month, 6:30-8:30pm and available online/Webcast.

Sonoma Marin County SCI Support Group

www.facebook.com/groups/810812255653338/

7 Indigo Dr. # 102

Petaluma, CA 94954 (Location may change)

Meets 3rd Monday of the month, 5:00-6:30pm.

FLORIDA

Brookdale Center at the NCH Healthcare System

11190 Health Park Blvd

Naples, FL 34110

Phone: 239-624-5700

Has formed a relationship with the Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association in Alpharetta, GA to offer peer visitors to patients. Provides brain injury, stroke and caregiver support groups.

Greater Orlando Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Network

www.goscin.org

1070 Montgomery Road, #2116

Altamonte Springs, FL 32714

Phone: 888-265-4890

Email: Info@GOSCIN.org

HEALTHSOUTH - Sea Pines Rehabilitation Hospital

101 East Florida Ave., Melbourne, Florida, 32901

Phone: 321-984-4600

Contact: Laura Leitz

HEALTHSOUTH - Tampa Bay Area Support Group

c/o Florida SCI Resource Center

901 N. Clearwater Largo Rd., Largo, Florida, 33770

Phone: 727-586-2999

Contact: Pattie Brenner

Memorial Regional Hospital South

<https://www.mhs.net/services/rehabilitation/conditions/spinal-cord>

3600 Washington St.
Hollywood, FL 33024
Phone: 954-518-2111 and 954-518-5725
Email: vleyland@mhs.net

Memorial South offers inpatient and outpatient services for individuals with paralysis. They provide comprehensive spinal cord treatment, rehabilitation and support aimed at optimizing recovery, restoring function, and if necessary, helping you adjust to a new way of life. SCI peer mentors and onsite and Zoom support groups are offered.

Spinal Cord Injury Support Group – Broward Chapter

<http://www.scisg.org/broward-chapter>

c/o **Encompass Health**

4399 Nob Hill Road
Sunrise, FL 33351
Contact: Ryan Gebauer
Phone: 954-696-7204
Email: rmgebauer@gmail.com

Spinal Cord Injury Support Group – Miami Chapter

Christine Lynn Rehab

<http://www.scisg.org/miami-chapter>

1611 NW 12th Ave.
Miami FL 33136
Contact: Anson James
Phone: 407-637-7774
Email: ansonansonj@aol.com

Spinal Cord Injury Support Group – Palm Beach Chapter

c/o **St. Mary's Medical Center**

<https://scisg.org/palm-beach-chapter/>

901 NW 45th St.
West Palm Beach FL 33407
Email: contact.scisg@gmail.com

West Florida Rehabilitation Institute

<https://westfloridahospital.com/calendar/support-groups.dot>

8383 N. Davis Hwy.
Pensacola FL 32514
Phone: 850-494-6100
Email: Carrie.Rayburn@gmail.com

Their spinal cord reunion/support group is catered towards those affected by spinal cord injuries and their family/caregivers. One group is held on the second Tuesday of each month at 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm in the Rehab Community Rooms.

GEORGIA

Columbus SCI Support Group

Phone: 706-322-9039

Contact: [Ramona Cost](#); rvcost@mindspring.com

HEALTHSOUTH Central GA Rehab Hospital

3351 Northside Dr.

Macon, Georgia, 31210

Phone: 478-201-6500

Meet 1st Tuesday monthly 6:30 PM in the cafeteria of Central GA Rehab Hospital

INDIANA

Spinal Cord Support Group

Hook Rehabilitation Outpatient Services

8501 E. 56th Street, Suite 140 Indianapolis, IN 46216

Phone: 317-621-3000

Contact: Holly Hons

First Thursday of the month 6:00 PM RSVP prior by phone

KANSAS

University of Kansas Health System

<https://www.kansashealthsystem.com>

3910 Rainbow Blvd.

Kansas City, KS 66160

Phone: 913-588-1227

SCI Support Group Phone: 913-588-7815

The Spinal Cord Injury Program at the University of Kansas Health System (a Level 1 Trauma Center), offers comprehensive services as well as an SCI support group that meets the second Thursday of each month. For more info on the support group, call 913-588-7815.

KENTUCKY

Friends with Spinal Cord Injuries

3785 Hwy 95

Benton, Kentucky, 42025

Phone: 270-493-0495

Contact: Andrea Coffman

Meets the third Thursday of the month at 4 p.m. (sometimes that changes depending on the speaker). Affiliated with Lourdes Hospital in Paducah, Kentucky and Spinal Cord Injury Association of Kentucky. Our mission: is to give people with Spinal Cord Injuries the ease of knowing they are not alone in the world.

MAINE

New England Rehabilitation Hospital SCI/D Support Group

<https://www.encompasshealth.com/locations/nerhp/our-programs>

335 Brighton Ave.

Portland ME 04102

Phone: 207-775-4000

An SCI/D support group that meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 4-5:30 pm.

MARYLAND

University of Maryland Rehabilitation & Orthopaedic Institute (UM Rehab) Spinal Cord Injury Support Group

<https://www.umms.org/rehab/community/support-groups>

Classes and Events

<https://www.umms.org/rehab/community/classes-and-events>

2200 Kernan Drive

Baltimore, Maryland 21207

Phone: (410) 448-2500

UM Rehab offers a Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support & Resource Group held every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6 to 7:30 PM. Each meeting features a designated topic of discussion, providing participants with an opportunity to exchange insights and experiences. Additionally, the SCI Peer Mentor Program is partnered with the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation Peer & Family Support Program.

Kennedy Krieger Institute's spinal cord injury support group

<https://www.kennedykrieger.org/patient-care/centers-and-programs/international-center-for-spinal-cord-injury/resources/support-groups-at-the-center-for-spinal-cord-injury>

801 North Broadway, Room 202

Baltimore MD 21205

Phone: 443-923-7998

Monthly support group, "Regeneration Generation." Each month features a new and exciting topic presentation or discussion. Meetings are held on one Monday each month from 12-2 PM, and lunch is provided for those who RSVP.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston Medical Center Support/Discussion Group Meeting

7 West-Harrison Ave Campus

Boston, Massachusetts, 02111

Phone: 617-414-5000

Boston Medical Center - 4:00 PM (Held the third Tuesday of the month)

Spaulding Support/Discussion Group Meeting

<http://www.spauldingrehab.org/>

300 First Avenue

Charlestown, MA

Phone: 617-952-5643

Spaulding Rehab Hospital – Every Thursday 4-5 PM in the Light House room on the 6th floor

Whittier Westborough Support Group Meeting

<https://www.whittierhealth.com/rehabilitation-hospitals-in-massachusetts/whittier-rehabilitation-hospital-westborough-westborough-ma/>

150 Flanders Road

Westborough, MA, 01581

Phone: 508-871-2000

Contact: Lynn

5:00 PM (Held the Second Wednesday of the month)

MISSISSIPPI**LIFE of Mississippi**

<https://www.lifeofms.com/>

1304 Vine St.

Jackson, MS 39202

Phone: 601-969-4009

Toll-free: 800-748-9398

An independent living center that offers peer support.

MISSOURI**Empower: Abilities**

<https://empowerabilities.org/>

1450 W. Cambridge St.

Springfield, MO 65807

Phone: 417-886-1188

A center for independent living that offers SCI and post-polio support groups

NEW JERSEY**NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse**

1-800-367-6274 or 973-989-1122 (Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5pm).

NEW YORK**Southern Tier Paralysis Support Group**

Vestal NY 13850

Phone: 607-727-5032

Email: Derek Vladescu at derekvladescu@gmail.com

This support group offers emotional, moral, and social support to those living with paralysis, their families, friends, caregivers, and anyone interested in learning about life with paralysis. Meetings are monthly online or at the local public library.

Syracuse Spinal Association Support Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/syracusespinal/>

Email: oliviawattles21@gmail.com

The support group meets in the ARISE building in Syracuse on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm at:

635 James St.
Syracuse, NY 13203

NORTH CAROLINA

Cape Fear Valley SCI Support Group

1608 Owen Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28304
Phone: 910-615-6492
Email: mjackd@capefearvalley.com

The support group is now hosted on the last Thursday of every month inside the Cape Fear Valley Inpatient Rehabilitation Gym from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. They cover a variety of topics and have an open forum type discussion on any and everything SCI related.

OHIO

Hillside Rehabilitation Hospital

8747 Squires Lane NE
Warren, Ohio, 44484
Phone: 330-841-3700; 330-841-3709

We meet the second Monday of each month at 5 PM in the Occupational/ Center One Gym at Hillside Rehabilitation Hospital. All are welcome.

OSU Dodd Hall Rehabilitation Hospital SCI Peer Support Group

Dodd Hall, 480 Medical Center Dr.
Columbus OH 43210
Phone: 614-408-0085
Email: pnowell264@gmail.com

The SCI Peer support group meets on the first Thursday of the month from 4 pm to 5:30 pm at the Blue Gym on the first floor of Dodd Hall when possible. Otherwise we meet virtually. We are a support group for SCI patients and caregivers to share experiences with others. The meeting is informal and everyone is welcome.

PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Valley Spinal Cord Injury Assoc.

2610 Belmont Ave.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19131
Phone: 215-477-4946
Contact: Bruce McElrath

GSPP Rehabilitation

<https://pennrehab.org/>
1800 Lombard St.
Philadelphia, PA 19146
Phone: 215-893-6540

GSPP Rehabilitation provides inpatient and outpatient rehab services to spinal cord injury patients. Additionally, they have a support group that provides a community to inpatient patients and members from the community that is held virtually monthly. There is a wheelchair clinic that works alongside their outpatient therapy team and SCI attending.

Magee Rehabilitation

<https://mageerehab.org/>

1513 Race Street

Philadelphia, PA 19102

Phone: 800-966-2433

First link is for brain injury, MS, stroke support group info. Second link is for SCI support group

Penn State Health Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

<https://www.pennstatehealth.org/>

500 University Dr., PO Box 850

Hershey, PA 17033

Phone: 717-531-0003 ext 282538

Email: nlokey@pennstatehealth.psu.edu

Virtual SCI support group every other Thursday from 6-7 pm for those with SCI as well as families, friends and caregivers. SCI peer mentoring program for mentors and mentees. Contact Nancy Lokey RN, CRRN, CBIS for details and questions.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Chester County Chapter Peer Support Group Meeting

135 Wylie St.

Chester, SC

Phone: 803-482-4389

Every 3rd Tuesday of every month at 5:30PM

Contact: Lee Carter (<mailto:llctcarter@chestertel.com>.)

Columbia, SC Area Support Group

2935 Colonial Drive

Columbia, SC

Phone: 803-252-2198

Every last Tuesday of every month at 6:30PM

Contact: Diane Epperly (<mailto:scscia@att.net>.)

Florence, SC Area Support Group

900E Cheves St.

Florence, SC

Phone: 803-459-4171

Every 1PM on 4th Thursday of every month from 4-6 pm

Contact: Ronnie McFadden (<mailto:ronnielmc@yahoo.com>.)

Orangeburg, SC Area Support Group

3000 Matthews Rd

Orangeburg, SC

Phone: (803) 829-2043

Every 2nd Thursday every month at 6:30PM

Contact: Rebecca Felder(<mailto:Rebecca.felder@yahoo.com>.)

Spartanburg, SC Area Support Group

101 St. Matthews Lane

Spartanburg, SC

Phone: (864) 595-1947

Meets every 3rd Tuesday at 6:15 pm

Contact: Dot Colson (<mailto:DColson@Dennys.com>.)

TENNESSEE**Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation, Spinal Cord Injury Program**

<https://www.siskinrehab.org/spinal-cord-injury>

1 Siskin Dr.

Chattanooga, TN 37403

Email: SpinalCordSupportGroup@siskinrehab.org

Siskin Hospital is a CARF accredited inpatient rehab program, with expertise in spinal cord rehabilitation. They provide patient centered care through a wide range of high quality physical rehabilitation services to achieve positive outcomes for all individuals served while benefitting the community at large.

Spinal Cord Outreach Advocacy and Resilience (SOAR) is a support group designed for individuals living with SCI, friends and families in the Chattanooga area. This group focuses on bringing to life the Siskin mission and vision for the community.

TEXAS**Baylor Scott & White Institute for Rehabilitation**

<https://www.bswrehab.com/conditions-and-services/spinal-cord-rehabilitation/>

909 N. Washington Ave.

Dallas, TX 75246

Phone: 214-820-9396

Every 2nd Tuesday every month at 6:30pm

Contact: Lea Goad (lgoad@bswrehab.com)

Support Challenge Inspire (S.C.I) is a community support group for anyone living with or affected by a spinal cord injury/disease. This program provides opportunities for social interaction with others who have similar experiences and can assist with adjustments of living with a spinal cord injury. Meetings are typically the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm in person on the 2nd floor PT gym and virtual

Spinal Cord Injury Support Group of Austin

St. David's Rehabilitation Hospital

1005 E. 32nd St.

Austin, TX 78705

Phone: 512-826-0813

The Spinal Cord Injury Support Group of Austin exists to provide support, information and education to individuals with new or existing spinal cord injuries, as well as their friends, families, and care attendants.

WASHINGTON

The Here and Now Project

www.hereandnowproject.org

PO Box 1572

Sumner, WA 98390

Phone: 253-880-5634

Email: info@hereandnowproject.org

The Here and Now Project is a social support network for those living with paralysis and other mobility disabilities. Through direct hospital outreach, monthly social groups, community activities and larger annual gatherings, they have built a fellowship who encourage and inspire each other to “Do Life” in the here and now.

The information contained in this message is presented for the purpose of educating and informing you about paralysis and its effects. Nothing contained in this message should be construed nor is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. It should not be used in place of the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider. Should you have any health care related questions, please call or see your physician or other qualified health care provider promptly. Always consult with your physician or other qualified health care provider before embarking on a new treatment, diet or fitness program. You should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this message.

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