

**ASSOCIATION AND MEDIATORS OF LEISURE TIME PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND
MENTAL HEALTH AMONG PEOPLE WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY IN CANADA
INFORMATION LETTER FOR SPINAL CORD INJURY ASSOCIATION.**



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People with spinal cord injury (SCI) experience immediate loss of sensory - motor functions (Dijkers, 2005). The number of people living with SCI in Canada is going to increase due to higher incidence and prevalence (Farry & Baxter, 2010) as well as increased life expectancy for people with SCI (McColl, 1997). Migliorini, Tonge and Taleporos (2008) suggested that 48.5 % of SCI population have mental health issues. Experience of mental health issues with physical disability can be more negative (Wells, 1985). Thus, there is a need for health promotion for this population.

Leisure activities have the ability to buffer the negative impact of injury and consequently disability and mental health. Active involvement in physical activities have been recommended for people with SCI (Rimmer, 1999; Ginis et al., 2008) but, 50.1% of SCI are not involved in any leisure time physical activities (LTPA; Ginis, 2005).

The purpose of this Master's thesis study is to explore the association between LTPA and mental health among people with SCI to answer the following questions: 1) what are the different types of LTPA popular among people with SCI in Canada and what is their level of involvement? 2) how mental health (depression & anxiety) varies among people who are involved in LTPA compared to those who are not involved 3) what is the influence of self-esteem, coping self-efficacy, social support and perceived barriers on the association of LTPA and mental health?

Data will be collected through an online/paper survey sent through a web mail by the organizations working with SCI. An invitation for participation in the study is expected in the monthly newsletters of these organizations. Potential participants can request a paper copy of survey from investigators. Responses will be anonymous, and collective findings will be shared with all the contributing organizations so that they can initiate required actions for improving mental health of people with SCI in Canada.

If you or your organization is interested in assisting in recruiting the participants for this study please
contact: Dr. Linda Rohr (lerohr@mun.ca; 709-864-6202) or Dr. Angela Loucks-Atkinson
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