

Start	End	Topic	Speakers
11:00	11:10	Introduction: Epidemiology and impact on quality of life of sexual dysfunctions in spinal cord injury	Michele Spinelli
11:10	11:20	Sexual counselling in early phase after spinal cord injury and decision making	Marcalee Alexander
11:20	11:40	Male sexual dysfunctions and treatment strategies	Gianluca Sampogna
11:40	12:00	Female sexual dysfunctions and treatment strategies	Marcalee Alexander
12:00	12:10	What is the role of rehabilitation for sex?	Melina Longoni
12:10	12:20	Discussion	Michele Spinelli Marcalee Alexander
12:20	12:30	Questions	All

Description

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sexuality is commonly overlooked during rehabilitation after spinal cord injury (SCI), although this is one of the areas greatest interest for this population. Studies suggests that there are barriers to addressing sexuality with patients beyond lack of education and training, including not being comfortable addressing sexuality and not knowing how to broach the subject. A critical professional focus from disease and medical illness to the promotion of health and wellness is a prerequisite to address sexual health of these patients. This workshop will provide an overview of the sexual functioning of people with SCI, giving the attendees the tools to address this issue in daily practice. Many different aspects will be treated extensively by different professionals (urologists and physiatrists) to deliver educational, medical and surgical solutions. The workshop will describe the importance of sexual rehabilitation, the methods to adopt and the need for adequate management of complications related to SCI that have a direct and indirect impact on sexuality, such as lack of lubrication in women, neurogenic lower urinary tract dysfunction, neurogenic bowel dysfunction, spasticity, image body, desire. The speakers will, also, focus on oral medication for both men and women that can improve sexual dysfunctions (e.g., PDE5 inhibitors for erectile dysfunction, testosterone for sexual desire), and the ones that also decreased sexual functions (e.g., baclofen - a largely use myorelaxant - may negatively affect orgasm). Surgical solutions will be presented to overcome infertility issues (i.e., surgical sperm retrieval) or treat erectile dysfunction (i.e., penile prosthesis implantation). At the end, the participants will be able to diagnose and offer therapeutic solutions to treat sexual dysfunctions in people with SCI helping them to achieve an active and satisfactory sexual life, which represents one of the domains affecting the quality of life the most.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- 1) A pro-active and early approach to sexual dysfunctions and sexuality is mandatory to improve independence and quality of life of people with SCI;
- 2) The approach to sexuality must include extensive knowledge of organic sexual functions but also understand the psychosocial factors involved;
- 3) Taking into account the importance of intersectionality and transdisciplinarity, allowing a holistic approach with the unique vision of each team member, with a focus on the patient and their families.

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- 1) It is important to have a team that understands the needs of people with SCI, who can feel comfortable when performing an intervention to demolish myths and prejudices in order to start talking about sexuality with patients from the very beginning;
- 2) The vision of all team professionals (e.g., physiatrists, urologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists) can enrich and facilitate the sexual interventions and allow actions to continue over time;
- 3) To achieve an active and satisfactory sexual life it is mandatory to assess other challenges (e.g., autonomic dysreflexia, bladder/bowel management, autonomy, spasticity) and prevent possible complications.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Marcalee Alexander, Gianluca Sampogna. Telerehabilitation for Treatment of Sexual Concerns. Book: Telerehabilitation, Elsevier, 20 Pages 251-261, ISBN 9780323824866. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-82486-6.00017-4>
- Alexander M, Sexual Sustainability: A guide to having a great sex life with a spinal cord disorder. Kindle Edition. 2020. Available online <https://www.amazon.com/-/es/Dr-Marcalee-Alexander-ebook/dp/B077HT5YQH>
- Longoni M; Degano M. (2020) Sexabilidad: Sexual empowerment, for people with disabilities- 1a ed adaptada. - San Jerónimo Sur: Melina Longoni. Libro digital, PDF. Archivo Digital: descarga y online ISBN 978-987-86-8070-5. Available online: <https://mailchi.mp/5a0d210c3ac4/j7ls0xjyng>

- Naphtali K, MacHattie E, Elliott S, Krassioukov A. PleasureAble sexual device manual for persons with disabilities. Available online: <https://icord.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PleasureABLE-Sexual-Device-Manual-for-PWD.pdf>
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- Sigmund Hough, Colleen Clemency Cordes, Lance L. Goetz, Angela Kuemmel, Jesse A. Lieberman, Linda R. Mona, Mitchell S. Tepe, Jithin G. Varghese; A Primary Care Provider's Guide to Sexual Health for Individuals With Spinal Cord Injury. *Top Spinal Cord Inj Rehab* October 2020; 26 (3): 144–151. doi: <https://doi.org/10.46292/sci2603-144>
- Carcier EM, Mona LR. Assessment and treatment of sexual health issues in rehabilitation: A patient-centered approach. In: Budd M, Hough S, Wegener S, Stiers W., eds. *Practical Psychology in Medical Rehabilitation*. Switzerland: Springer Nature; 2017:287–294. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-34034-0_31
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- Aikman, K, Oliffe, JL, Kelly, MT, McCuaig, F. Sexual health in men with traumatic spinal cord injuries: A review and recommendations primary health-care providers. *Am J Men Health*. 2018;12(6):2044–2054. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988318790883>
- Alexander M, Courtois F, Elliott S, Tepper M. Improving Sexual Satisfaction in Persons with Spinal Cord Injuries: Collective Wisdom. *Spinal Cord Inj Rehabil*. 2017 Winter;23(1):57-70. <https://doi.org/10.1310/sci2301-57>

Aims of Workshop

The workshop aims are to discuss the importance of sexual health in people with spinal cord injury/dysfunction (SCI/D), promote competencies in sexuality among professionals, and describe the dysfunctions and challenges that people with SCI/D face in order to achieve an active and satisfying sexual life. Health professionals will obtain practical diagnostic and therapeutic tools to manage sexual life, promoting self-determination and independence in SCI/D. In the different modules, a broad and complete overview of urgent topics (e.g., inadequate management of the bladder and/or bowel as a trigger for incontinence, autonomic dysreflexia, spasticity) will expand and strengthen knowledge to work with this population.

Educational Objectives

People with spinal cord injury (SCI) often experience changes in their sexual health and in the ways they perceive their sexuality. Sexuality is a central fundamental aspect in the lives of people with SCI and has a great impact on quality of life. Sexuality in people with some disability condition has historically been invisible, censored, genito-pathologized and denied, so it is time to commit to a real approach from processes that enable and promote the enjoyment of a diverse and pleasurable sexuality. This workshop provides easy-to-use and powerful tools for addressing sexual health in the daily practice of the healthcare professionals. The speakers will cover all aspects of current solutions: from basic practical tips for sexuality (e.g., lubricant use, toys, bladder/bowel management, intimacy, body image) to medical treatments, such as oral drugs and surgery (e.g., penile prosthesis implantation). Extensive time will be allocated to the discussion in order to let participants engage and interact with the faculty. At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to assess sexual dysfunctions in a pro-active way, deliver practical solutions to get an active and satisfactory sexual life, and improve independence and self-determination of people with SCI.

Learning Objectives

1. To discuss the problems and challenges that affect and limit sexual life in people with spinal cord injury.
2. To learn the diagnostic and medico-surgical therapeutic tools to help people with spinal cord injury achieve an active and satisfactory sexual life.
3. To evaluate and improve the interactions between sexual functions and other systems (e.g., neurogenic lower urinary tract dysfunction, neurogenic bowel dysfunction, spasticity, autonomic dysreflexia) in people with spinal cord injury.

Target Audience

Urology, Urogynaecology and Female & Functional Urology, Bowel Dysfunction, Pure and Applied Science, Conservative Management

Advanced/Basic

Advanced

Suggested Learning before Workshop Attendance

- 1) Marcalee Alexander, Gianluca Sampogna. *Telerehabilitation for Treatment of Sexual Concerns*. Book: *Telerehabilitation*, Elsevier, ISBN 9780323824866. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-82486-6.00017-4>
- 2) Longoni M; Degano M. (2020) *Sexabilidad: Sexual empowerment, for people with disabilities- 1a ed adaptada*. - San Jerónimo Sur: Melina Longoni. Libro digital, PDF. Archivo Digital: descarga y online ISBN 978-987-86-8070-5. Available online: <https://mailchi.mp/5a0d210c3ac4/j7ls0xjyxg>
- 3) Alexander M. *Sexual Sustainability: A guide to having a great sex life with a spinal cord disorder*. Kindle Edition. 2020. <https://www.amazon.it/Sexual-Sustainability-having-disorder-English-ebook/dp/B077HT5YQH>

