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

New Mobility magazine: Starting A Support Group August 2016 issue
https://newmobility.com/starting-support-group/

Tragedy Assistance Programs for Survivors (TAPS)
www.TAPS.org
3033 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

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.
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 educacionales.
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/](http://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](http://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](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](https://norcalsci.org/family-support)

**Placerville Mobility Support Group**
Meeting Place: Round Table Pizza
3975 Missouri Flat Rd.
Placerville CA 95667
Contact: Lynn Murray
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://www.scvmc.org/health-care-services/rehabilitation/peer-support  
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  
www.ilrscc.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@ilrscc.org

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: hbleasdale@ucdavis.edu
Meets every Wednesday, 3:00-4:00pm.

Santa Clara County: SCI Connections
www.facebook.com/rehabresearchcenter
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
https://www.nchmd.org/template/brookdale-(new)/brookdale-support-groups
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
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
http://www.scisg.org/palmbeach-chapter
901 NW 45th St.
West Palm Beach FL 33407
Contact: Peggy Domitz
Phone: 954-471-8844
Email: cheffouru@att.net

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 and Orthopedic Institute (formerly known as Kernan Hospital)**

Spinal Cord Injury Support Group
https://www.umms.org/rehab/community/support-groups
2200 Kernan Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21207
Phone: 410-448-6307
2nd Tuesday of each month 6-8 p.m

**Kennedy Krieger Institute**’s spinal cord injury support group
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)

**Mercy Medical Center Support Group Meeting**
http://www.mercycares.com/body-springfield.cfm?id=64&action=detail&ref=3640
271 Carew St.
Springfield, MA 01104
Mercy Medical Center - the last Tuesday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Deliso Conference Center (lower level)

**Spaulding Support/Discussion Group Meeting**
https://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**
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/
2864 S. Nettleson Ave.
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**

**Long Island Spinal Cord Injury Resource Center**
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://syracusespinalassociation.org/
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

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

HEALTHSOUTH
www.healthsouthaltoona.com
Rehabilitation Hospital of Altoona, 2005 Valley View Blvd.
Altoona, PA 16602
Phone: 814-944-3535

HEALTHSOUTH - Rehabilitation Hospital of York
1850 Normandie Dr.,
York, PA 17404
Phone: 717-767-6941

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**

**West Tennessee Spinal Cord Injury**
[www.westtennspinal.com](http://www.westtennspinal.com)
Jackson, TN 38305
Meetings at: Patterson Physical Therapy, 176 West University Pkwy, Suite E, Jackson TN
Phone: 731-616-3906
Email: krobyvia@yahoo.com
A peer support group that meets quarterly for information, sharing issues, and friendship.

**TEXAS**

**Spinal Cord Injury Support Group of Austin**
St. David's Rehabilitation Hospital
1005 E. 32nd St.
Austin, TX 78705
Phone: 512-826-0813
Email: pam.fletcher@stdavids.com
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**

**Northwest Spinal Cord Injury Network**
https://unitedspinal.org/group/northwest-spinal-injury-network-bellingham-wa/
Bellingham WA 98226
Phone: 360-296-5336
Email: sciofwhatcom@gmail.com
A peer support group.

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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