



Every person's experience of the effects of SCI is different. The type and intensity of the complications are unique to each individual. For comprehensive details refer to the 'Back On Track' book available at [www.nzst.org.nz](http://www.nzst.org.nz)



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# THE DISABILITY ICEBERG

► Every person with a Spinal Cord Impairment has invisible complications unnoticed by those around them.

Most of those issues have a greater impact on the daily lives of the impaired person than the ones you can see.



# THE DISABILITY ICEBERG

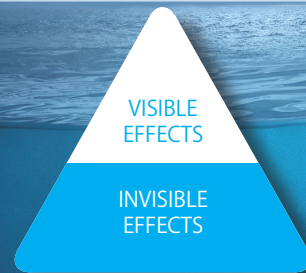
► Spinal Cord Injury / Impairment (SCI) causes many different issues for the person with the impairment depending on the impact on their spine and nervous system.

Generally, the level of damage to the spinal cord determines which nerves are affected and, as a consequence, the parts of the body controlled by those nerves.

Some are of these effects are visible to all e.g. inability to walk, use one's fingers or breathe unaided.

However, there are many more invisible effects of damage to a spinal cord which can affect the daily life of the person more profoundly than the things that are seen.

*The Disability Iceberg* is what we use to describe what is *visible* (on the surface) and what is *invisible* (unseen below the surface) for a person with SCI.



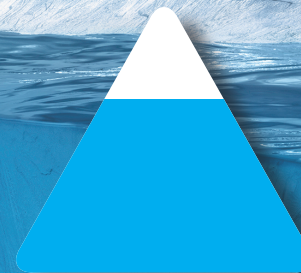
## TETRAPLEGIC

### VISIBLE EFFECTS

- May use a Power Wheelchair
- Reduced/No Hand Function
- May use a Ventilator

### INVISIBLE EFFECTS

- Pain (constant, intermittent, occasional)
- Muscle Spasms & Tension
- Fatigue & Difficulty Concentrating
- Increased Effort in Daily Life
- Bowel Issues
- Bladder Issues (e.g. infections)
- Skin (e.g. pressure areas/sores/sensation loss)
- Psychological (e.g. depression)
- Nutrition
- Psycho-social
- Accessibility & Inclusion in Society



## PARAPLEGIC

- Uses a Manual Wheelchair

- Pain (constant, intermittent, occasional)
- Muscle Spasms & Tension
- Fatigue & Difficulty Concentrating
- Increased Effort in Daily Life
- Bowel Issues
- Bladder Issues (e.g. infections)
- Skin (e.g. pressure areas/sores/sensation loss)
- Psychological (e.g. depression)
- Nutrition
- Psycho-social
- Accessibility & Inclusion in Society



## WALKING SCI PERSON

- May have a limp

- Pain (Constant, Intermittent, Occasional)
- Muscle Spasms & Tension
- Fatigue & Difficulty Concentrating
- Increased Effort in Daily Life
- Bowel Issues
- Bladder Issues (e.g. infections)
- Skin (e.g. pressure areas/sores/sensation loss)
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