

Questions for 3/21/14
Patient Education Luncheon

- ❖ **What are the best community recreational activities for SCI individuals and how to access them?**
 - Recreational Therapy – Jessica and/or Shawna
 - Access Magazine
 - Bay Area Disability Sailors – Saturday Free for Vets

- ❖ **What are the challenges with respect to temperature regulation? I feel cold all the time.**
 - Temperature drop of 2-3 degrees normal
 - Wear appropriate clothing
 - Sensation considerations, pressure ulcers, potential for overheating
 - Place heavier covering over sensitive areas of body
 - Don't sit too close to sources of heat to reduce possibility of burns
 - Check with your Provider for more detailed information

- ❖ **What are the best activities to exercise my upper extremities?**
 - Depends on level of injury
 - Always balance exercise to promote strength and flexibility
 - OT, PT and Rec Therapy will work with you to set up a program
 - SCI/D Center par course
 - New PAD Aquatic Center

- ❖ **How do I decrease edema and still be able to sit up and not compromise my sitting time?**
 - Monitor/Control salt intake
 - Elevate legs, 20-30 minute maximum time limit on elevation
 - Motion if possible
 - Support Stockings
 - Computer stand for bed use to change positioning

- ❖ **What's the best way to succeed in healing my skin after flap surgery?**
 - Be prepared for extended period of healing possible 2 years.
 - Pressure release is crucial aspect of sitting protocols
 - Good bowel and bladder management
 - Avoid shearing stress to skin

- ❖ **How can we ensure the SCIU has adequate staffing?**
 - Consult PVA
 - Write your Congressman
 - Advocate for yourself and your fellow Veterans.

❖ **How do you cope with SCI?**

- Family, Faith and keeping busy
- Facingdisability.com

❖ **What are some helpful tips in managing AD?**

- Bowel and bladder management
- Carry AD cards to help explain AD to folks outside the SCI community

❖ **Can I request more spices on my food?**

- Yes you may request additional spices on your food. However, salt content will be limited per providers' instructions. Speak with staff about having your seasoning adjusted to meet your needs.

❖ **What is the meaning of life?**

- Each of us must create our own meaning. For some it will be quality relationships, for some it will be paid or volunteer work, for some it will be creative process, for some it will be finding oneness with nature and the universe, and for others it will be introspective wisdom.
- To find meaning in life, actively seek it. You are unlikely to stumble across it accidentally while home alone and idle.

❖ **I have diabetes. What are my health risks and how can I manage them?**

- Poorly controlled diabetes creates risk of pressure sores, neuropathic pain, impaired vision, poor circulation, poor healing, kidney failure, heart disease, stroke and cognitive impairment, changes in mood, and changes in weight and constant hunger and thirst.
- Diet, exercise and medication are the three main components of diabetes management. The exercise component can be especially challenging for tetraplegics.

❖ **As a SCI veteran, how can I obtain care at other VA facilities in a timely manner?**

- The wait time for appointment varies throughout the system according to available resources and the urgency of a Veteran's problem. Having an SCI will not put you ahead of other veterans needing medical care.
- PVA and other service organizations can advocate for you
- The local SCI coordinator may be able to help
- You will get better service if you request non-urgent visits long in advance.