Advancing physical activity knowledge and participation
among Canadians living with spinal cord injury.

A Neighborhood's Visual Appeal May Motivate People with SCI to Exercise

Purpose

To determine if a neighborhood's visual appeal (nice setting and atmosphere) and number of sidewalks can motivate people with SCI to exercise more often.

Summary

- A neighborhood's visual appeal can increase motivation to exercise outdoors in people with SCI.
- The number of sidewalks in a neighborhood did not increase motivation to exercise in people with SCI.

Possible Applications:

- Making neighborhoods more visually appealing may get people with SCI to consider exercising daily.

Research Abstract

Examining the Individual and Perceived Neighborhood Associations of Leisure-Time Physical Activity in Persons with Spinal Cord Injury

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs have been shown to be useful for explaining leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) in persons with spinal cord injury (SCI). However, other factors not captured by the TPB may also be important predictors of LTPA for this population. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of neighborhood perceptions within the context of the TPB for understanding LTPA in persons living with SCI. This is a cross-sectional analysis (n=574) using structural equation modeling involving measures of the TPB constructs, perceived neighborhood esthetics and sidewalks, and LTPA. TPB constructs explained 57% of the variance in intentions and 12% of the variance in behavior. Inclusion of the neighborhood variables to the model resulted in an additional 1% of the variance explained in intentions, with esthetics exhibiting significant positive relationships with the TPB variables. Integrating perceived neighborhood esthetics into the TPB framework provides additional understanding of LTPA intentions in persons living with SCI.

Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K.P., Martin Ginis, K.A., Wilson, P.M., & The SHAPE-SCI Research Group. (2010). Examining the individual and neighborhood environmental correlates of leisure-time physical activity behavior in persons with spinal cord injury. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine,* 39, 192-197.