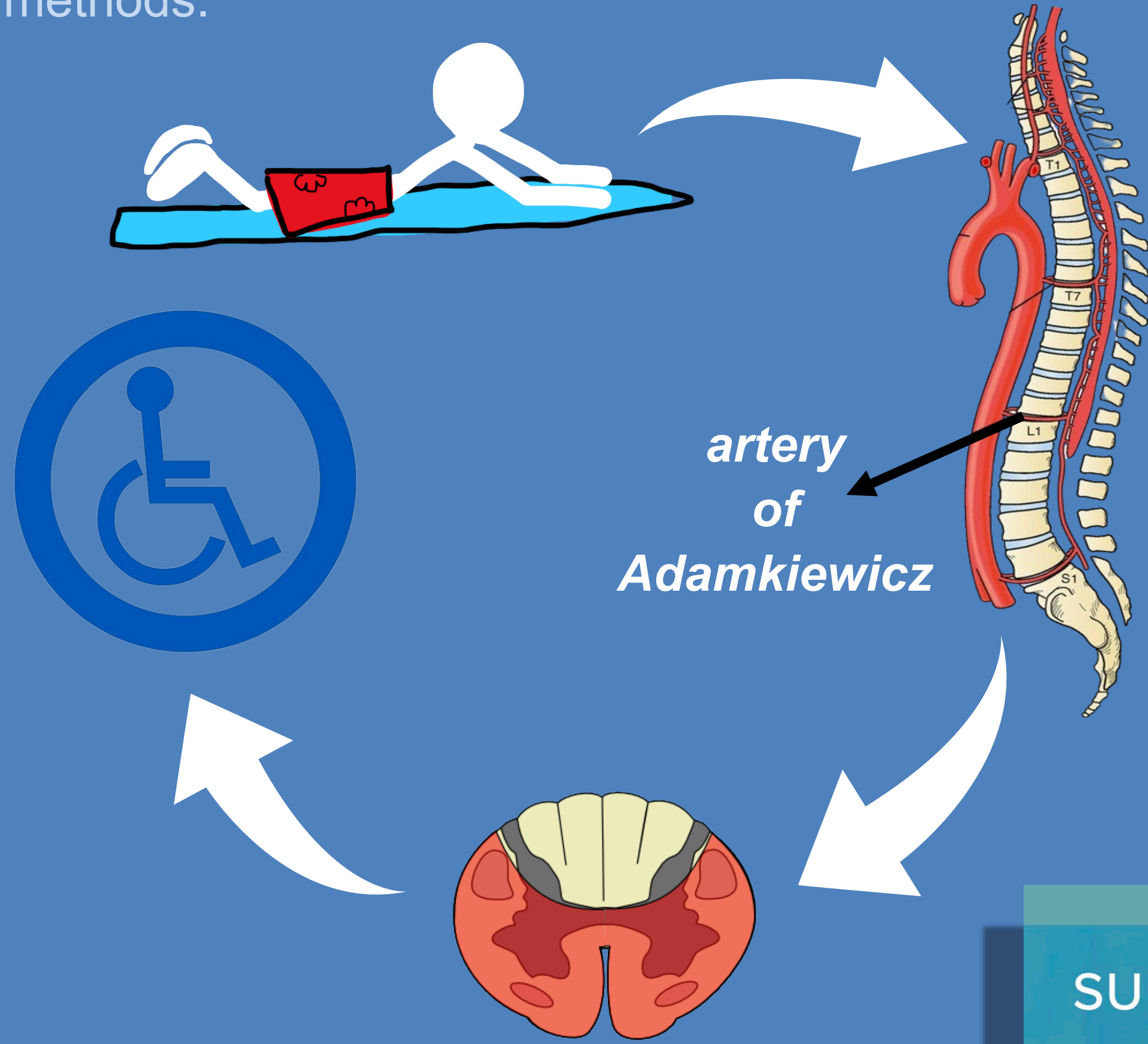


Outcomes in Surfer's Myelopathy: The First Prospective Cohort Study

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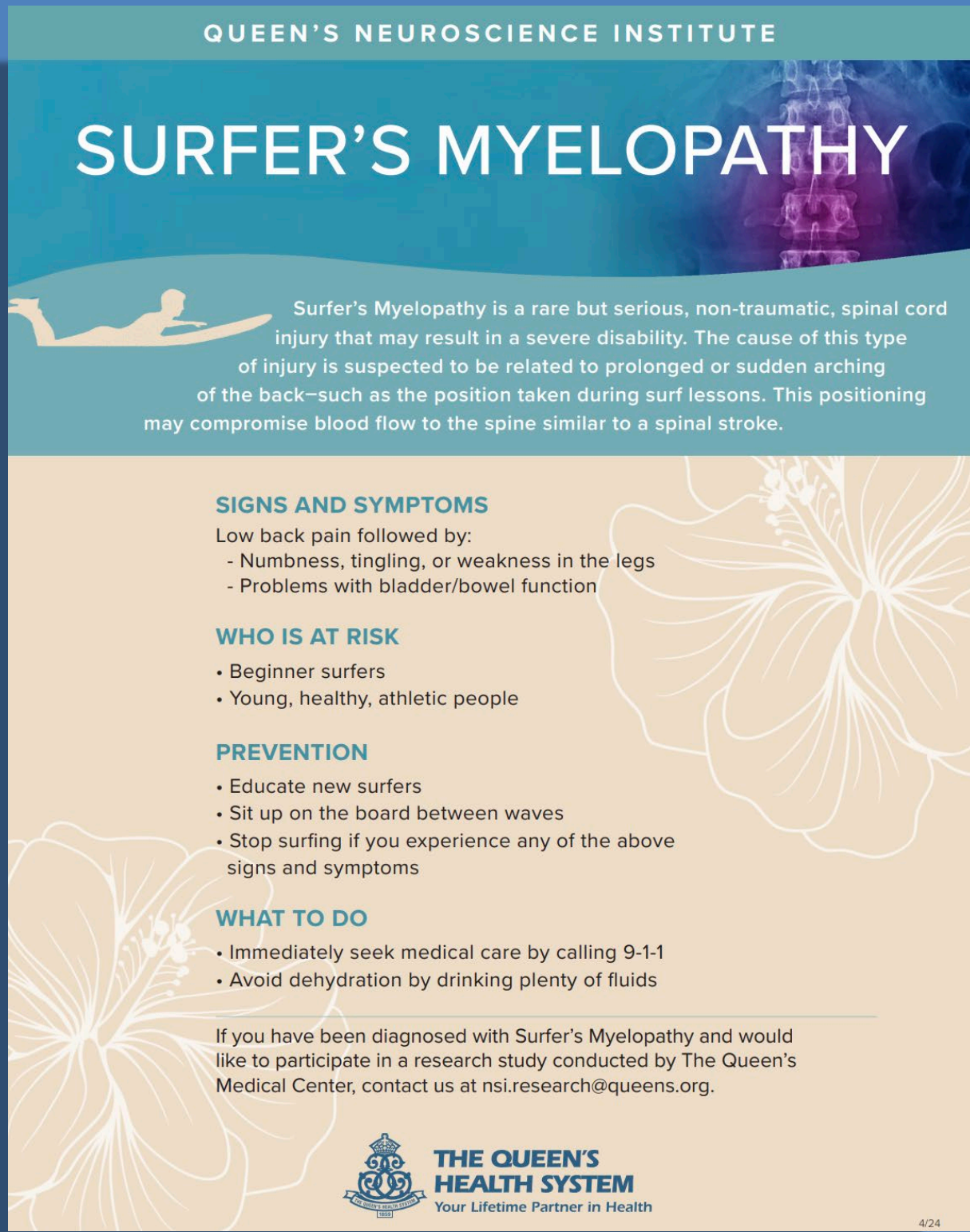
Background

Surfer's myelopathy (SM) is a non-traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) characterized by the complete or partial loss of sensory-motor function in the lower half of the body¹. The prevalence of this disease in first-time surfers gave rise to its name¹. This condition is notably unique due to the variability of the injury and the wide range of recovery outcomes observed over time². Currently, the literature on SM is limited to single case reports and case series, which do not consistently track the patient's recovery process long-term. The exact etiology of SM has yet to be determined, but symptoms consistent with those of **anterior spinal cord syndrome** suggest that it is caused by an **ischemic issue** presented by **lying in the prone position** for extended periods of time²⁻⁴. Prospective studies are needed to enable consistent and systematic follow-ups, which would provide more insight into the progression of the disease and the effectiveness of current treatment methods.



Future Directions

- Better organization to avoid missed follow-ups
- Scores do not cover the full extent of impairment
- AIS examination is not standard among all healthcare professionals
- Participant retention
- Prioritize outreach & education to spread awareness and prevent SM

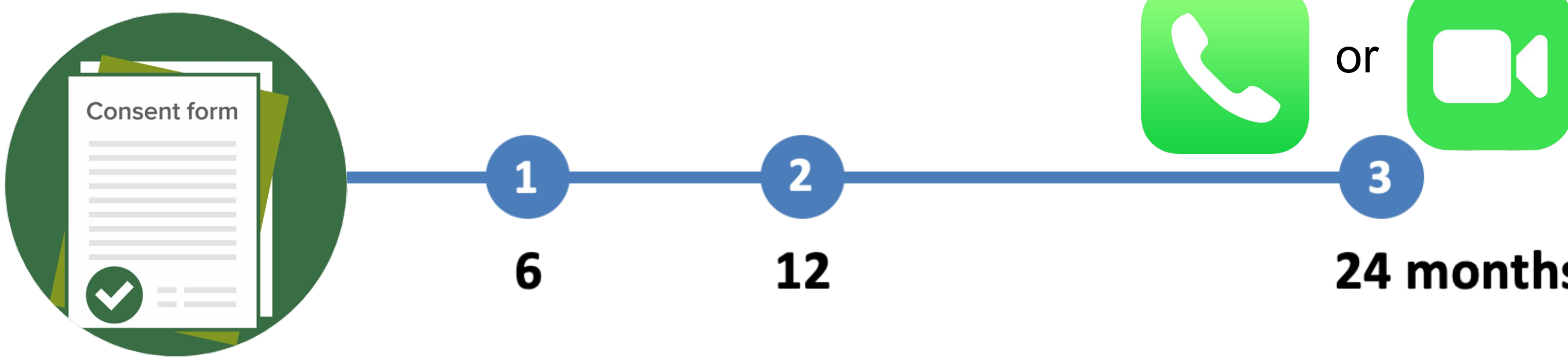


Methods

Inclusion Criteria

- ✓ Treated or referred to QMC* between July 2021 and July 2026
- ✓ Non-traumatic myelopathy associated with surfing
- ✗ Clinical history of direct SCI or SCI not associated with surfing

Follow-up at 3 timepoints post-injury



*Patients were also recruited from hospitals outside QUMG's jurisdiction using flyers made available to other healthcare providers in the surrounding area.

Recorded two scores at each follow-up

- Spinal Cord Independence Measure (SCIM) Version III
- ASIA Impairment Score (AIS)

- Scored out of 100
- 17 items to measure 3 domains of independence:

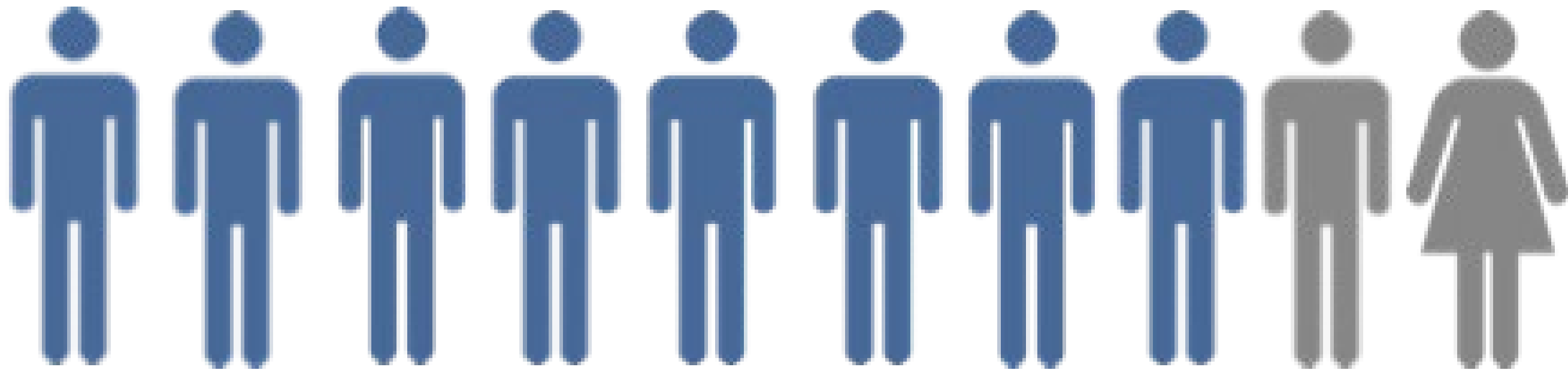
- Self-care
- Respiration & sphincter management
- Mobility

Quality of Life, Functional Independence

Preliminary Results

- 2/11 patients lost to follow-up
- 2/11 patients have completed the study
- 4/33 follow-up appointments were missed
- 12/33 follow-ups are still pending scheduling and completion

Cohort Demographics



Patient ID	Age	Sex	AIS				SCIM III Score			Adverse Events (Y/N)
			Discharge	6 mos.	12 mos.	24 mos.	6 mos.	12 mos.	24 mos.	
1	16	M	A	-	-	A	-	-	68	N
2	30	M	B	-	D	?	-	81	79	Y
3	27	M	C	lost to follow up						
4	18	F	E	lost to follow up						
5	20	M	-	D	D	pending	82	88	pending	pending
6	18	M	B	-	?	pending	-	96	pending	pending
7	30	M	D	E	?	pending	100	100	pending	pending
8	16	M	B	C/D*	pending	pending	100	pending	pending	pending
9	32	M	B	?	pending	pending	66	pending	pending	pending
10	39	M	?	E	pending	pending	100	pending	pending	pending
11	23	M	?	pending	pending	pending	pending	pending	pending	pending

References & Acknowledgements



Scan Me!

Table 1. Outcomes of Surfer's Myelopathy at 6,12, & 24 months post-injury. Dashes indicated missed follow-ups. Question marks indicate missing data that the patient was unable to provide. Asterisks indicate self-reported values. Some patients were not evaluated using the AIS and asked to estimate their condition. Two patients were completely lost to follow-up. Patients who were more recently added to the study have follow-up interviews pending completion later in time.



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