



Shepherd Center

TOP 10 THINGS

TO ASK When Choosing a
Rehabilitation Program
for Spinal Cord Injury,
Brain Injury, or Stroke

You Have a Decision to Make About Your Treatment

Experiencing a spinal cord or brain injury, or stroke, is likely the hardest thing you and your loved one have ever had to endure.

But you are determined to get better, and that means you need to participate in intensive rehabilitation. Understanding where to go from here can sometimes be confusing.



You Have the Right to Choose Your Rehabilitation Facility

Patients often look to their physicians to tell them where to go for continued treatment. But the best route to recovery comes when patients and their loved ones have a two-way conversation with their healthcare provider and investigate all their treatment choices.

You have the right to choose and advocate for yourself or a loved one, so you'll want to do the following:



Thoroughly research the rehabilitation programs and specialists you have been referred to.



Research additional, undiscussed options.



Seek a second opinion if you feel one is necessary.



Ask your physician to refer you to specific rehabilitation programs or specialists of your choice.

A woman with blonde hair in a ponytail, wearing a blue t-shirt with a cat and dog graphic, is sitting in a wheelchair. She is holding a light-colored dog wrapped in a white towel. The dog is wearing a blue harness. The woman has a pink, textured object in her hand. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a hospital or rehabilitation center.

Find a Rehabilitation Program that meets **YOUR NEEDS**

It's important to be confident about the quality of care you or a loved one receive in a rehabilitation program for brain or spinal cord injury.

Where you are treated makes a difference in how much function you will regain, whether you will be able to return home, and how you adjust to your new normal.

TOP 10 THINGS

To Consider When Choosing a Rehabilitation Program for Spinal Cord Injury, Brain Injury, or Stroke

As you research your options, be sure to strongly consider the following:

1 Is spinal cord injury (SCI), acquired brain injury (ABI) and/or stroke rehabilitation the facility's main focus?

Keep in mind many rehabilitation hospitals serve general rehabilitation needs and are not specialized in SCI or ABI. Ask how many new patients with spinal cord or brain injuries or strokes the facility treats in a year.

2 Ask for rehabilitation outcomes data.

Medical professionals define success in rehabilitation by looking at three key measurements:



Percentage of patients who return to home and/or work following treatment.



Patients' achievements related to mobility and self-care.



Rate of rehospitalization, which shows how well a facility prepares a patient and family for their return home through family training and transition support.

→ See more clinical outcomes information at shepherd.org/outcomes

3 What are people saying?

Seek out former patients and family members who can speak to the culture and quality of care they received at the facility. Check out the facility's social media pages and ask about patient satisfaction survey results.

→ Read more at shepherd.org/satisfaction



SHEPHERD CENTER
INSIGHTS



- Shepherd Center treats about **250 inpatients with spinal cord injury annually**, whereas a general, non-specialized rehabilitation program may only see a dozen cases a year.
- Shepherd treats about **300 inpatients with brain injury and 140 inpatients with stroke annually**.

Patients at Shepherd Center:

- Are **about 20% more likely to return to their communities after rehabilitation** than the national average.
- **Meet or exceed risk-adjusted expected values at discharge for mobility** and self-care at rates up to **15.1% higher** than the national benchmark depending on diagnosis.
- Are **rehospitalized at a rate of just 4.6% within 30 days of leaving** Shepherd Center.

- At Shepherd Center, inpatients gave **98 out of 100 points to rate their likelihood to recommend the facility to others**.



SHEPHERD CENTER INSIGHTS



4 What is the average age of patients?

SCI and ABI often happen to people in the prime of their lives. These patients benefit from intensive rehabilitation to maximize their recovery, so they can return to work, school, or family life.



Being around other patients in your age range enhances camaraderie and support.

- At Shepherd Center, the **average age of people with SCI is 42 years old, and those with ABI and stroke is 45.5.**

5 Does the facility offer comprehensive care?

SCI, ABI, and stroke are complex conditions that require care beginning from the moment of injury through acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, post-acute care and transition to care at home.

- Shepherd Center is uniquely equipped to handle **all stages of care, even for patients who require ICU-level care.**
- We have a **10-bed ICU unit** where patients can begin some rehabilitation even while being treated for acute injuries.

6 How much therapy does the program provide?

Investigate what kind of therapies are offered, and how often.

- Shepherd Center patients participate in rehabilitation therapy for **3 to 7 hours a day, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and others as appropriate.**

7 What is the average length of stay in the program specifically for patients with injuries similar to yours?

Keep in mind, for spinal cord and brain injuries, less is not necessarily more.

- The **average length of stay** in Shepherd Center inpatient programs is **four to seven weeks.**

8 What's in the pipeline for future treatments?

Because SCI and ABI are lifelong conditions, it's a good sign if new therapies are being investigated to help patients live better now and in the future.

- Performing research and participating in clinical trials help keep Shepherd Center at the **forefront of new and improved treatments.**

9 Is there an array of services for both the patient and family?

Ask whether there are programs such as recreational therapy, music therapy, and family counseling.

Investigate how the facility educates families, and whether it provides housing for out-of-town family members whose loved ones must travel away from home to get the best care.



SHEPHERD CENTER
INSIGHTS



Shepherd Center offers:

- **Classes to teach caregivers about the injury.**
- **Support groups for patients and families.**
- **30 days of philanthropically funded housing for family members of newly injured rehabilitation inpatients if both the patient and family live more than 60 miles from Shepherd Center.**

➔ Visit shepherd.org/housing for more details.

10 Does there seem to be a personal connection between the treatment team and the patient?

Does the hospital maintain contact with patients after they are discharged to track progress and help sustain their recovery?

Ask about follow-up care, peer support, online resources, and various class and recreation offerings that keep you and your family connected even after your stay is complete.

- **Shepherd Center's Transition Support Program is available for discharging patients and families who need additional support.**

➔ See shepherd.org/TSP

As a world-renowned provider of comprehensive, specialized rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury or stroke, Shepherd Center delivers intensive, individualized rehabilitation that you won't find anywhere else.





What are the Next Steps?

- 1** After you and your physician review your options for rehabilitation, your physician must then **submit a referral to the facility(ies) you think will provide the best care.**
- 2** That facility will then **evaluate the patient,** and determine if and when they can admit your loved one.
During this process - which can take several days to several weeks, depending on your situation - **the rehabilitation facility will contact you for more information.**
- 3**

Learn More about Shepherd Center in this Video Tour:

WATCH NOW →

shepherd.org/video-tour



At Shepherd Center, dedicated Access Case Managers are your main point of contact during this evaluation period, and will be available via phone and email.

**BEST
HOSPITALS**

U.S. News
& WORLD REPORT

**REHABILITATION
2022-23**

**Ranked Among the
Top 10 in the Nation
by U.S. News**



Have Questions?

We're here to help in any way we can. Contact us today.

CONTACT US TODAY

shepherd.org/admissions



EMAIL

information@shepherd.org



CALL

(800) 743-7437