

Cauda Equina Syndrome (CES)

Mission

SII's mission is to engage with people with a spinal cord injury and their families, to address barriers to full participation in society and to empower them to work towards achieving personal, social and vocational goals.

This CES Red Flag initiative has been developed by Spinal Injuries Ireland and is supported by Coloplast

For more information
www.spinalinjuries.ie

August 2019

YOUR 5 RED FLAGS TO SAVE YOUR SPINE

S**SADDLE ANAESTHESIA****P****PAIN****I****INCONTINENCE****N****NUMBNESS****E****EMERGENCY**

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What is CES?

CES occurs when a bundle of nerves below the end of the spinal cord is damaged. Without fast treatment, permanent nerve problems and even paralysis can happen.

What causes it?

- Back / spine problems such as a slipped disc
- Tumours near the spine
- Injuries

What are the warning signs?

S

Saddle Anaesthesia: Weakness, tingling or numbness in your 'saddle region' -the parts of your body that would touch the saddle if you were sitting on a horse: Upper inner thighs, groin, buttocks and genitals.

P

Pain: Pain, weakness, tingling or numbness in your lower back, backs of the thighs, lower legs and feet.

I

Incontinence: Loss of control, urgency or finding it hard to pee or poo. Any strange sensation or numbness when you pee or poo.

N

Numbness: Numbness in your lower back, backs of the thighs, lower legs and feet. Loss of feeling around your groin or during sex- pins and needles or numbness

E

Emergency: Any of these can be a warning sign of CES. Go to your GP or Emergency Department without delay.

Delay= Disability

Get checked out

CES is rare and its symptoms can be caused by other things. For example, back pain is very common. But it's important to go to your GP and get any symptoms checked out.

How is it diagnosed?

An MRI can diagnose CES.

How is it treated?

It can be treated with surgery to your spine.

A medical emergency

It is very important to treat CES quickly. Early treatment can help to avoid nerve-damage problems like bladder, bowel or sexual problems, lasting pain and paralysis.

Symptoms can develop slowly over months or suddenly - within a few hours.