

FACTSHEET 6

Summer Energy Challenges After Spinal Cord Injury



For people living with spinal cord injury, higher energy use is often unavoidable. The focus should be on:

- ✓ Maintaining a safe and comfortable home
- ✓ Improving energy efficiency where possible
- ✓ Accessing financial support and specialist advice



With the right combination of practical changes and external support, it is possible to better manage energy costs without compromising health or independence.



Hot weather can also create significant challenges for people living with spinal cord injury. Changes in temperature regulation may make it harder for the body to cool down effectively, increasing the risk of overheating, dehydration, fatigue, and discomfort.

Staying cool safely may increase electricity use during warmer periods, particularly where fans, cooling equipment, or additional laundry are required.

1 Keeping the home cooler

- Close curtains, blinds, or shutters during the hottest part of the day
- Open windows early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are lower
- Create airflow through the home where possible and safe
- Use fans to improve air circulation and comfort

2 Managing heat safely

- Stay hydrated throughout the day
- Wear lightweight, breathable clothing
- Avoid direct sunlight for prolonged periods indoors or outdoors
- Monitor indoor temperatures in rooms used for long periods

3 Using cooling equipment efficiently

- Use fans only in occupied rooms where possible
- Switch equipment off when no longer needed
- Choose energy-efficient cooling devices if replacing equipment
- Charge mobility equipment during cooler periods where practical

4 Laundry and hygiene considerations

Hot weather may increase the need for washing clothes, bedding, or pressure relief items more frequently.

- Use full loads where possible
- Wash at lower temperatures when appropriate
- Air dry outdoors where practical and safe



People with spinal cord injury may experience heat differently from others. Maintaining a safe and comfortable environment during warmer weather is important for wellbeing, comfort, and independence.



Further Support

Contact Back Up's Energy Advisor on energy@backuptrust.org.uk or visit our website www.backuptrust.org.uk/energy.

Our advisor can discuss the challenges you are facing and offer advice, support and onward referrals to other organisations where appropriate.



Other Organisations

Energy Saving Trust — www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Scope — free disability energy advice service — www.scope.org.uk

Citizens Advice — support with billing, disputes, and energy rights — www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Turn2us — tools to find grants and check benefit eligibility — www.turn2us.org.uk