

Bone Density Letter

To Whom It May Concern,

Your patient has applied to participate in NextStep Atlanta Spinal Cord Injury Recovery Center. NextStep Atlanta is an intensive activity-based recovery program for individuals with a spinal cord injury (SCI). The program is designed to provide the optimum potential for regaining function below injury level.

The workouts at NextStep Atlanta involve intense, dynamic, weight bearing exercises.

All NextStep Atlanta clients over 6 months post injury must obtain a bone density assessment and are required to submit a copy of the bone density report with a **doctor's interpretation** before their first session at NextStep Atlanta. We do not interpret bone density reports. Clients must update bone density assessment annually. Bone densities are not required for clients under 18 years old.

We require bone density scans because research has shown that dramatic bone loss occurs in individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI) (Garland et al., 1992), with loss of bone accelerated immediately after SCI (Maimoun et al., 2006) and becoming more severe in the lower limbs compared to the upper extremities (Dauty et al., 2000). Bone loss seems to be greater in individuals with complete injury versus incomplete injury (Saltzstein et al., 1992). This is of clinical significance as a greater incidence of fractures of the proximal tibia and distal femur has been observed in this population compared to the able-bodied (Ragnarsson and Sell, 1981).

To determine if your patient is eligible to participate in NextStep Atlanta, and minimize their risk of potential injury, we require from you, as their treating practitioner, the following:

1. A copy of your patient's bone density report. The report must include regional bone densities of the hip and femur. Do not provide only total body scans.
2. **Your interpretation of the T-score and Z-score from the bone density report on your letterhead** (as we do not interpret the results)

If you wish to discuss NextStep Atlanta or have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 678-580-1404. Fax # 678-580-1298