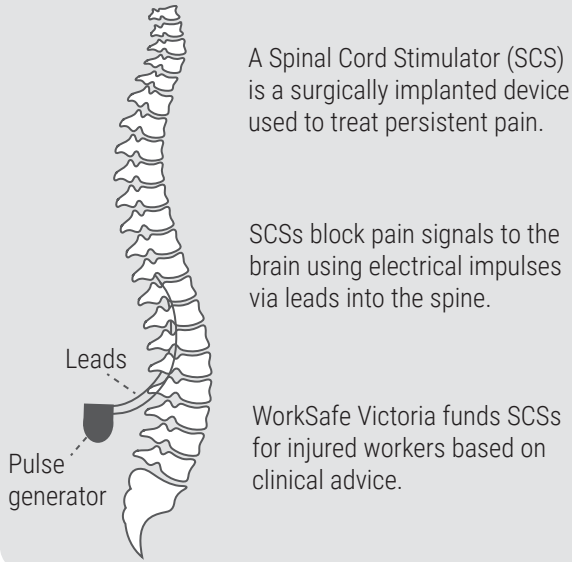


Are Spinal Cord Stimulators effective at relieving back pain?

What is a Spinal Cord Stimulator?



In 2023, ISCRR carried out an **Evidence Review** to provide WorkSafe Victoria with up-to-date information about the **clinical effectiveness** of SCSs for **persistent pain**.

Research Quantity

Systematic Reviews
(Including 1 Cochrane Review)

21



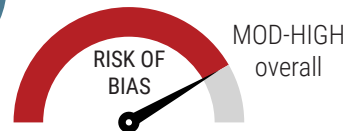
10

19

Prospective Cohort Studies

Randomised Control Trials

Research Quality



Methodological issues

- blinding
- small case numbers
- lack of placebo controls

What did the ISCRR Evidence Review find?

Are SCSs clinically effective at treating persistent pain?



SHORT TERM (0-3 months)
MODERATE SUPPORT



MEDIUM TERM (3-6 months)
MODERATE SUPPORT



LONG TERM (12+ months)
WEAK SUPPORT

Can SCSs improve other aspects of life?



MODERATE SUPPORT

For **reductions in medication use** and improving **quality of life**



WEAK SUPPORT

For improvements in **return to work** and **functioning and disability**



What do the findings mean?

- SCS implants for persistent pain are **clinically effective in the short and medium-term**, but **evidence is lacking on the long-term outcomes** for patients.
- SCS implants have shown **limited, but positive**, effects on **quality of life**, improving **disability and functioning**, and **reducing medication use**. The effects of SCS implants on return to work are much less certain.

ADVERSE EVENTS reported to the TGA

Of the 520 events, **most were rated as severe (79%) or life-threatening (13%)**. **Device malfunction** was the **most common event (56.5%)**. The authors estimated that each year in Australia, for every 10 spinal cord stimulators implanted, approximately 4 are removed.

Jones CMP et al. J Patient Saf. 2022;18(5):507-11.

This research summary was prepared in August 2023. Please contact ISCRR (info@iscrr.com.au) for a copy of the evaluation (ISCRR Project 323) which informed this summary.



ISCRR

Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research

A joint initiative of WorkSafe Victoria and Monash University