

**Dancing into recovery:
Application of dance as therapy modality for patient with central cord syndrome**

Haley Willarson, MD¹
Anita Kou, MD^{1,2}
1) Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, NM Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital
2) Spinal Cord Injury Service, NM Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital

Patient

29-year-old male with no past medical history presented with spinal cord contusion at C4-C5 and C5-C6 following a fall with hyperextension injury. Underwent C3-C6 posterior decompression and fusion. Post-operative, continued to have weakness, coordination issues, paresthesias, and bowel/bladder dysfunction. On exam, deemed C4 AIS D incomplete tetraplegia.

Rehab Course

Four weeks of acute inpatient therapies with use of gait and balance assistive technology. Discharged one week ahead of schedule following functional gains. Worked with PT and OT biweekly and after two months post-discharge, was back to work full time as dance instructor and no longer using assistive gait device.

Dance in conjunction with gait assistance technology as useful therapy modality for recovery of balance and coordination in patient with central cord syndrome

Discussion

Use of gravity-assisted technology for balance and coordination through dancing helped speed both functional and vocational recovery for this patient. Multiple sessions with this device allowed him additional time to focus on higher level activities for balance and coordination of the lower extremities, which may have played a part in his shortened acute rehabilitation course. This intervention, in addition to traditional rehabilitation techniques, may help other patients get back on their feet more quickly.

