Autonomic Dysreflexia Wallet Card

AUTONOMIC DYSREFLEXIA WALLET CARD
Autonomic Dysreflexia (AD) can happen to people with a spinal cord injury (SCI) at or above T6. It is an acute medical emergency which could result in seizure or stroke due to high blood pressure.

Common Warning Signs
- Sudden rise in blood pressure (increase of 20-40 mmHg above normal)
- Pounding headache
- Sweating above level of SCI
- Blotchy or flushed skin
- Goosebumps
- Blurry vision, stuffy nose
- Anxiety, something not right
- Chest tightness, heart flutters, trouble breathing

Common Causes of Autonomic Dysreflexia
- Bladder – overfilled, plugged catheter, stones, infection
- Bowel – irritation, constipation, impaction, hemorrhoids, digital stimulation
- Skin – pressure, sores, ingrown toenail, tight clothing or belts
- Menstrual cramps, pregnancy labor/delivery, genital stimulation

Treatment of Autonomic Dysreflexia
- Sit up 90 degrees; raise level of head
- Check bladder drainage
- Stop bowel program if in progress
- Check skin - Loosen tight clothing or shoes
- Seek emergency medical treatment if signs continue
- Report all AD episodes to your health care provider

Notes to Health Care Provider
- Temporary treatment (vasodilators):
  - 2% Nitroglycerin (Nitro-Bid ointment of Nitroglycerin sublingual tab)
  - Nifedipine Procardia (bitten or chewed)
  - Atropine (only for significant bradycardia)

Physician’s name and Phone #

Medications