

**WHITAKER BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING INSTITUTE
FRIDAY SEMINAR SERIES
AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROLOGY**

PRESENT:

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**“Pain and Autonomic Regulation After Spinal Cord Injury:
Metamorphosis Within The Dorsal Horn”**

DATE: April 8, 2005
TIME: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
PLACE: **Traylor 709**
Host: Lawrence Schramm

Abstract:

Spinal cord injury (SCI) is associated with devastating, often intractable, clinical conditions. Patients with SCI, in addition to readily recognized and reasonably well-understood somatic motor deficiencies, often suffer chronic pain that is severe, refractory to treatment, and obscure in etiology. In addition, many SCI patients suffer from poorly-understood autonomic pathology. For example, cardiovascular regulation is often seriously compromised, resulting in (somewhat anomalously) both orthostatic hypotension and hypertensive crises. Numerous clinical observations suggest that the high prevalence of chronic pain and the incidence of hypertensive crises are associated. Loss of descending inhibition, plastic changes within spinal neurons, sprouting of primary afferents, and sensitization of peripheral alpha-adrenergic receptors have all been considered mechanisms for hypertensive crises. Interestingly, similar mechanisms have been proposed for chronic pain following SCI. Evidence for the relationship between pain and autonomic dysfunction and for the mechanisms that may underlie this relationship will be presented. The clinical importance of understanding the mechanisms responsible for pain and autonomic dysfunction after spinal cord injury will be emphasized.

Any questions, contact 410-955-3132.

Check the web for a complete list.

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