

# Consciousness disorder

A [disorder](#) of [consciousness](#), or impaired consciousness, is a state where consciousness has been affected by damage to the brain. Consciousness requires both [wakefulness](#) and [awareness](#).

[Amnesia](#).

[Coma](#).

[Confusion](#).

[Drowsiness](#).

[Loss of consciousness](#) (LOC).

[Minimally conscious state](#).

[Stupor](#).

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High-[cervical spinal cord stimulation](#) can alter cortical activity and [cerebral metabolism](#). These effects are potentially beneficial for disorders of consciousness. A better understanding of the effects of clinical application of stimulation is needed. Piedade et al. aimed to evaluate the existing [literature](#) to determine the state of available knowledge. They performed a [literature review](#) of clinical studies assessing cervical spinal cord [epidural stimulation](#) for disorders of consciousness. Only [peer-reviewed](#) articles reporting preoperative and postoperative clinical status were included.

Nineteen studies were included. A total of 532 cases were reported, and 255 patients were considered responsive (47.9%). Considering only studies published after the definition of [minimally conscious state](#) (MCS) as an entity, 402 individuals in unresponsive wakefulness syndrome (UWS) and 113 in MCS were reported. Responsiveness to SCS was reported in 170 UWS patients (42.3%) and in 78 MCS cases (69.0%), although the criteria for responsiveness and outcome measures varied among publications.

Cervical SCS yielded encouraging results in patients with [disorders](#) of [consciousness](#) and seems to be more effective in MCS. More extensive investigation is needed to understand its potential role in clinical practice <sup>1)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>

Piedade GS, Assumpcao de Monaco B, Guest JD, Cordeiro JG. Review of spinal cord stimulation for disorders of consciousness. Curr Opin Neurol. 2023 Oct 27. doi: 10.1097/WCO.0000000000001222. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37889524.

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