

This condition is seen in spinal cord injury patients who have injury above T5/6.

It is characterised by:

- fluctuating blood pressure (especially triggered by opening bowels or by bladder/bowel distension)
- pain in the head
- sweating
- flushing
- rapid/slowed heartbeat
- paroxysmal hypertension

A condition termed: **orthostatic hypotension-induced autonomic dysreflexia** is seen in chronic cervical myelopathy. (damage to spinal nerve roots in the neck)

This occurs when blood pressure falls, perhaps when changing posture suddenly, or in hot surroundings. The symptoms mentioned above may all occur.

Exacerbating factors:

- rapid positional change
- morning (due to overnight recumbency)
- large meals
- warm environment
- cough
- emptying bladder
- opening bowels
- exertion
- medication that causes blood vessel dilation

