

## Before You Read This Book

*Physical Fitness: A Guide for Individuals with Spinal Cord Injury* does not attempt to cover every possible exercise, nor is it to be considered a text on exercise physiology. Other excellent source texts have been written and are referenced at the end of most chapters. This book does offer a solid foundation in understanding the importance of physical fitness and the ways in which persons with SCI can achieve, maintain, and enjoy keeping fit. Several SCI levels are covered and variations on how the desired exercises and sports activities can be accomplished are included.

The purpose of this book is to inform persons with SCI and clinicians that they can, as partners, design a routine that would allow them to work out independently, after becoming familiar with activities from a trained instructor. The sports shown are performed with equipment that does not require additional assistance. The use of free weights may require an observer (as it would for any nondisabled lifter) when performing a heavy routine. The use of this equipment, commonly found in health clubs across the country, allows clients to feel confident in integrating into that mainstream environment knowing that they can also work the same muscle groups, although not always in the same manner. Certain sports activities may need to be adapted; however, the same muscles mentioned are used and the client can achieve the same fitness levels as persons who have no spinal cord injury. If the client and/or the clinician has the desire to do so, this book will assist in finding ways to reach higher levels of physical conditioning, fitness, and enjoyment of recreational sports, which they can then enjoy as much as, or more than, the nondisabled population.

*Tamara T. Sowell, Editor*