

# PERSONALIZED CARE ■ PROGRAM FOR SPRAINS & STRAINS

Services provided in an  
assessment centre



Personalized care program

**SPRAINS & STRAINS**

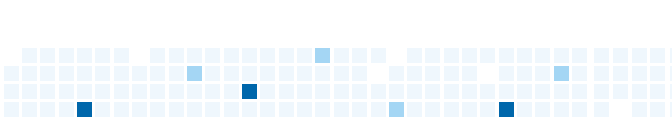
Québec 

Some 12,000 road accident victims in Québec each year suffer soft tissue injuries, especially sprains and muscular strains.

To speed up recovery, the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) set up a model care program on the strength of scientific results from a pilot project that operated from March to September 2001.

Accident victims suffering from sprains and strains who have taken part in the program reported being very satisfied with the care and services they received.

The program's originality resides in the coordinated organization of proactive care and services delivered with a personalized approach.



## Description of care and services provided under the program

In the course of your rehabilitation, you might be referred to an assessment centre for some or all of these professional services:

- a medical assessment,
- a psychological assessment,
- an assessment of your functional capabilities,
- interdisciplinary care.

### Medical assessment

The centre's physician will conduct a physical examination and make an assessment of your progress. This doctor could, for instance, explain why recovery might not be moving forward sufficiently, give advice on how to improve your sleep or help you better manage pain. The meeting could give you the opportunity to air your concerns. Should the assessing physician deem it useful, further tests might be ordered to make a more precise diagnosis. Any treatment recommendations will be part of a report sent to your doctor and to the SAAQ's compensation officer.

At no time does the assessing physician replace your doctor, who will continue to ensure your medical follow up.



## Psychological assessment

The psychologist at the assessment centre is a health care professional trained to help automobile accident victims. The conduct of an assessment will provide the opportunity to bring up the difficulties experienced in connection with your physical condition (sleep, humour, fears, etc.). While troublesome, such difficulties are common, even frequent, and usually diminish over time. The psychologist will listen attentively and likely have suggestions to level the obstacles to your rehabilitation. If needed, you will be directed toward other resources.

## Assessment of functional capabilities

An assessment of your functional capabilities becomes necessary when in spite of treatment you received, recovery does not move forward sufficiently. Physiotherapists and occupational therapists evaluate your physical capabilities in relation to the demands of employment and living habits. Those health care professionals will propose various activities similar to what you must carry out in the context of work or in your daily occupations.

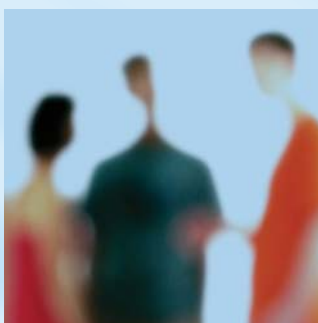
A functional assessment may take a half-day or a full day. **Maximum effort** will be asked of you throughout the assessment to target your functional capabilities. Since muscles that might not have been used for some time will be called upon, you may feel achy or fatigued, which is quite normal after a training session. Rest assured, your accident-related injury will not worsen and muscular tensions will dissipate over the following days.

After the assessment, the health care professionals will discuss their treatment recommendations with you. Your doctor, compensation officer and therapist will each receive a copy of the functional assessment report.

## Interdisciplinary program

After the functional assessment, the team might suggest that you take part in an interdisciplinary program, which is offered at the assessment centre. The centre has an interdisciplinary team composed of professionals such as a physician, a psychologist, a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist, a physical rehabilitation therapist and any other health care professional who could help in your recovery.

On arrival at the centre, you will be assessed by a physician and a psychologist who will determine the obstacles to your progress. The interdisciplinary team will set goals with you to favour a resumption of work or usual activities as speedily as possible. A program lasting up to seven weeks will be developed, with your participation, in light of your work-related tasks or daily activities. A rehabilitation counsellor with the SAAQ will meet with you or keep in contact to follow your condition's progress and put into place the measures needed, at the most opportune moment, to favour a resumption of work or normal activities.



## As part of an interdisciplinary program, you:

- will have exercises to do to improve your physical condition;
- will take part in group workshops offered by the centre's psychologist on subjects related to rehabilitation, and perhaps personal encounters to broach topics meeting your personal needs;
- will have exercises reproducing movements required in your work or daily living.

To simulate a workday schedule, activities will be spread over five and one-half hours, Monday through Friday, and tailored to take into account your rhythm and tolerance. The interdisciplinary team will act as guide and supervisor, considering that you are the key link in your rehabilitation. The efforts you invest each day will increase your endurance and allow you to see constant improvement in your condition. The first two weeks might be more demanding from a physical point of view, as you will be more active, requiring motivation and your full participation. The progress you make will encourage you to continue. Remember that the team of health care professionals is there to answer your questions and help you.

Every two weeks, until the end of the program, you will participate in a meeting with the assessment centre team, the rehabilitation counsellor with the SAAQ and your compensation officer (by telephone). The meeting will allow you to measure your progress, to ask questions and state your goals for the coming weeks. Avail yourself of the occasion to express your concerns about the return to work, for example, or resuming your pre-accident lifestyle.

You might still have some pain at the end of the interdisciplinary program. You should not worry, as you will find greater endurance with practice. Continuing the exercises taught to you and applying the advice given to you in the context of the program will contribute to diminishing residual pain, or even gradually eliminate it. The ultimate goal is to maximize your capabilities so you can get back to work and your preferred activities.



INFO

For more information,  
contact your compensation  
officer, doctor or professional  
who supervises your  
treatment at a clinic.

[www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca)

**Société de l'assurance  
automobile**

**Québec** 

C-4476 (04-06)-A