

Self-rated low physical capacity tied to low back pain

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Women health care workers who rate their physical capacity as low are significantly more likely to develop non-chronic and persistent low back pain compared with those who assess their physical capacity as high, according to research published in the Feb. 1 issue of *Spine*.

(HealthDay)—Women health care workers who rate their physical capacity as low are significantly more likely to develop non-chronic and persistent low back pain (LBP) compared with those who assess their physical capacity as high, according to research published in the Feb. 1 issue of *Spine*.

Charlotte D.N. Rasmussen, of the National Research Centre for the [Working Environment](#) in [Copenhagen](#), and colleagues surveyed 1,612 female health care workers to determine how their self-assessed physical capacity was associated with the development of LBP in the subsequent two years. Each health care worker assessed their own physical capacity on the basis of strength, endurance, flexibility, and balance in 2004.

The researchers found that, compared with health care workers with high physical capacity, those with self-assessed low and medium physical capacity had a significantly increased likelihood of developing non-chronic LBP (odds ratios, 1.52 and 1.37, respectively). In addition, those with low physical capacity were more than twice as likely to develop persistent LBP as those with high physical capacity (odds ratio, 2.13).

"In conclusion, this study supports that low physical capacity increases the risk of LBP among female health care workers. In particular, a low physical capacity more than doubles the risk of persistent LBP," the authors write. "The preventive potential from exercises increasing the general physical capacity ought to be investigated among female [health care workers](#)."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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