

# Single-question low back pain severity assessment accurate

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Patient-reported chronic low-back pain severity, based on answering a single question, provides an accurate indicator of patient-reported health status, according to a study published in the February issue of the *Journal of Spinal Disorders & Techniques*.

(HealthDay)—Patient-reported chronic low-back pain (CLBP) severity, based on answering a single question, provides an accurate indicator of patient-reported health status, according to a study published in the February issue of the *Journal of Spinal Disorders & Techniques*.

Alesia B. Sadosky, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.B.A., from Global Health Economics and Outcomes Research at Pfizer Inc. in New York City, and colleagues analyzed data from the 2009 Adelphi Disease Specific Programme, in which [patients](#) reported the severity of their CLBP condition by answering a single question: "Please rate how your CLBP

condition is today." Patient reported severity (mild, moderate, or severe) was assessed with respect to scores on standard patient self-report measures of [pain](#) and function.

The researchers found that, of the 1,363 survey respondents (49 percent male; mean age, 54.8 years; 52 percent employed at least part time), 28.6, 53.3, and 18.2 percent, respectively, reported mild, moderate, and severe CLBP. As the severity of CLBP increased, there were significant differences observed in increased pain, pain interference with function, and CLBP-linked impairment while working, mainly due to presenteeism. There were higher costs related to lost work productivity resulting from increased work impairment, with estimated annual lost productivity costs of \$7,080 per patient for mild CLBP, \$16,616 for moderate CLBP, and \$25,032 for [severe](#) CLBP. CLBP severity was inversely associated with patient satisfaction with pain-related medication.

"The association between patient-reported CLBP severity and other patient-reported outcomes demonstrates that in the clinical setting, patient-reported CLBP severity provides an accurate and suitable indicator of patient-reported [health status](#)," the authors write.

Several authors are employed by or disclosed financial ties to Pfizer and Adelphi. The study was supported by Pfizer.

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