

Workers' compensation data captures back pain experience

January 8 2014



Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—Workers' compensation data can be used to capture a partial understanding of workers' low back pain (LBP) experiences, according to a study published in the Dec. 15 issue of *Spine*.

Amanda E. Young, Ph.D., from the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety in Hopkinton, Mass., and colleagues interviewed 90 participants with a compensated claim for [work](#)-related LBP regarding their LBP-related experiences after their initial return to work. Self-reports were compared with wage-replacement (WR) data, which was provided by the participants' workers' compensation provider.

The researchers found that there was agreement between WR-based indicators and self-reports of additional time off due to LBP. A payment history that began with more than seven consecutive days of initial WR

payments, followed by a WR payment gap of more than seven consecutive days, followed by another WR [payment](#) period of more than seven consecutive days, was the best performing WR-based indicator (sensitivity, 55 percent; specificity, 73 percent; overall accuracy, 69 percent). The best performing WR indicator was not associated with other self-reports of post-return-to-work LBP recurrence, such as LBP being significantly worse than usual; LBP [experiences](#); seeking LBP-related health care; and the experience of back condition-related difficulties.

"Results indicate that compensation data can be used to capture what a claimant would self-report as additional time off after their initial return to work due to their LBP condition," the authors write.

Relevant financial activities outside the submitted work were disclosed: grants/grants pending.

More information: [Full Text](#)

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Citation: Workers' compensation data captures back pain experience (2014, January 8) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-01-workers-compensation-captures-pain.html>

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