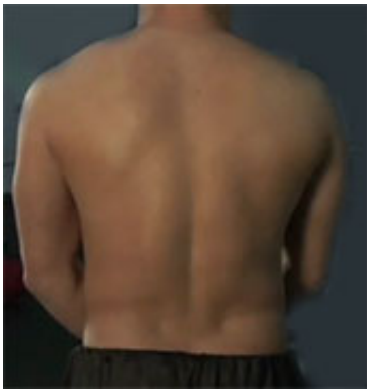


Paraspinal fat infiltration tied to low back pain, disability

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(HealthDay)—Paraspinal fat infiltration correlates with high-intensity pain/disability and with structural abnormalities in the lumbar spine, according to a study published in the July 1 issue of *The Spine Journal*.

Andrew J. Teichtahl, M.B.B.S., from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, and colleagues examined correlations for paraspinal muscle size and [fat content](#) with lumbar spine symptoms and structure in a community-based magnetic resonance imaging study. The authors measured the cross-sectional area (CSA) and amount of fat in multifidus and erector spinae and examined the [correlation](#) with outcome in 72 adults not selected on the basis of low back pain.

The researchers observed no correlation for muscle CSA with low back pain/disability or structure. There was a correlation between high percentage of fat in multifidus and increased risk of high-intensity pain/disability (odds ratio, 12.6; $P = 0.007$) and modic change (odds ratio, 4.3; $P = 0.04$). There was a correlation also noted between high fat replacement of erector spinae and reduced intervertebral disc height ($P = 0.002$) and modic change ($P = 0.04$).

"Although cause and effect cannot be determined from this cross-sectional study, longitudinal data will help to determine whether disabling [low back pain](#) and structural abnormalities of the spine are a cause or result of [fat](#) replacement of paraspinal muscles," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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