

# Persistent back pain linked to earlier mortality in older women

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(HealthDay)—Frequent persistent back pain is associated with increased

mortality in older women, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

Eric J. Roseen, D.C., from Boston Medical Center, and colleagues used data from the Study of Osteoporotic Fractures to assess whether back pain is associated with all-cause and cause-specific [mortality](#) in 8,321 [older women](#) (≥65 years). Back pain was categorized as no back pain, nonpersistent, infrequent persistent, or frequent persistent.

The researchers found that 56 percent of patients died during a median follow-up of 14.1 years. A higher proportion of women with frequent persistent back pain died (65.8 percent) versus those with no back pain (53.5 percent). After adjustment for other factors, women with frequent persistent back pain had a higher hazard of all-cause mortality (hazard ratio [HR], 1.24), cardiovascular mortality (HR, 1.34), and cancer mortality (HR, 1.33). There were no associations between mortality and other categories of back pain. Limitations in instrumental activities of daily living explained 47 percent of the effect of persistent frequent [back pain](#) on all-cause mortality, while slow chair stand time and walking speed explained 27 and 24 percent, respectively.

"Being unable to perform, or avoiding, [daily activities](#) could lead to weight gain, development or progression of other chronic health conditions, and ultimately earlier death," Roseen said in a statement.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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