

# Oswestry Low Back Pain Disability Questionnaire

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## Pain Intensity

- The pain comes and goes and is very mild.
- The pain is mild and does not vary much.
- The pain comes and goes and is moderate.
- The pain is moderate and does not vary much.
- The pain comes and goes and is severe.
- The pain is severe and does not vary much.

## Personal Care (Washing, Dressing, etc.)

- I would not have to change my way of washing or dressing in order to avoid pain.
- I do not normally change my way of washing or dressing even though it causes some pain.
- Washing and dressing increase the pain but I manage not to change my way of doing it.
- Washing and dressing increase the pain and I find it necessary to change my way of doing it.
- Because of the pain I am unable to do some washing and dressing without help.
- Because of the pain I am unable to do any washing and dressing without help.

## Lifting

- I can lift heavy weights without extra pain.
- I can lift heavy weights but it gives extra pain.
- Pain prevents me lifting heavy weights off the floor.
- Pain prevents me lifting heavy weights off the floor, but I can manage if they are conveniently positioned, e.g., on a table.
- Pain prevents me lifting heavy weights but I can manage light to medium weights if they are conveniently positioned.
- I can only lift very light weights at most.

## Walking

- I have no pain on walking.
- I have some pain on walking but it does not increase with distance.
- I cannot walk more than 1 mile without increasing pain.
- I cannot walk more than 1/2 mile without increasing pain.
- I cannot walk more than 1/4 mile without increasing pain.
- I cannot walk at all without increasing pain.

## Sitting

- I can sit in any chair as long as I like.
- I can sit only in my favorite chair as long as I like.
- Pain prevents me from sitting more than 1 hour.
- Pain prevents me from sitting more than 1/2 hour.
- Pain prevents me from sitting more than 10 minutes.
- I avoid sitting because it increases pain immediately.

## Standing

- I can stand as long as I want without pain.
- I have some pain on standing but it does not increase with time.
- I cannot stand for longer than 1 hour without increasing pain.
- I cannot stand for longer than 1/2 hour without increasing pain.
- I cannot stand for longer than 10 minutes without increasing pain.
- I avoid standing because it increases the pain immediately.

## Sleeping

- I get no pain in bed.
- I get pain in bed but it does not prevent me from sleeping well.
- Because of pain my normal nights sleep is reduced by less than one-quarter.
- Because of pain my normal nights sleep is reduced by less than one-half.
- Because of pain my normal nights sleep is reduced by less than three-quarters.
- Pain prevents me from sleeping at all.

## Social Life

My social life is normal and gives me no pain.

My social life is normal but it increases the degree of pain.

Pain has no significant effect on my social life apart from limiting my more energetic interests, e.g., dancing, etc.

Pain has restricted my social life and I do not go out very often.

Pain has restricted my social life to my home.

I have hardly any social life because of the pain.

## Traveling

I get no pain when traveling.

I get some pain when traveling but none of my usual forms of travel make it any worse.

I get extra pain while traveling but it does not compel me to seek alternate forms of travel.

I get extra pain while traveling which compels to seek alternative forms of travel.

Pain restricts me to short necessary journeys under 1/2 hour.

Pain restricts all forms of travel.

## Changing Degree of Pain

My pain is rapidly getting better.

My pain fluctuates but is definitely getting better.

My pain seems to be getting better but improvement is slow.

My pain is neither getting better or worse.

My pain is gradually worsening.

My pain is rapidly worsening.

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### Scoring:

Total score = SUM (points for all 10 sections)

Disability in percent = (total score) / 50 \* 100

If not all of the questions are answered then disability in percent = (total score) / (5 \* (number of questions answered)) \* 100

### Interpretation:

0% to 20%: minimal disability

The patient can cope with most living activities. Usually no treatment is indicated apart from advice on lifting sitting and exercise.

21%-40%: moderate disability

The patient experiences more pain and difficulty with sitting lifting and standing. Travel and social life are more difficult and they may be disabled from work. Personal care sexual activity and sleeping are not grossly affected and the patient can usually be managed by conservative means.

41%-60%: severe disability

Pain remains the main problem in this group but activities of daily living are affected. These patients require a detailed investigation.

61%-80%: crippled

Back pain impinges on all aspects of the patient's life. Positive intervention is required.

81%-100%:

These patients are either bed-bound or exaggerating their symptoms.

### References:

1) Fairbank JC, Pynsent PB, "The Oswestry Disability Index." Spine 2000; 25(22):2940-2952

2) Fairbank JCT, Couper J, Davies JB. "The Oswestry low Back Pain Questionnaire." Physiotherapy 1980; 66: 271-273

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