

# FUNCTIONAL STATUS AND PAIN SCREENING TOOLS FOR LOW BACK PAIN

For Health Care Providers  
June 2021

Clinical status and scenario	Screening tool	Scoring and intervention	
Functional status	<a href="#">ODI</a>	The Oswestry Disability Index (ODI), also known as the Oswestry Low Back Pain Disability Questionnaire, is an extremely important tool that researchers and disability evaluators use to measure a patient's permanent functional disability. The test is considered to be the "gold standard" of low back functional outcome tools.* The ODI is used to assess the patient's subjective rating of perceived disability related to their functional limitations, such as work status or difficulty caring for oneself. The higher the score, the higher the perceived disability. Using this test at the initial visit helps the examiner understand the patient's perception of how their back pain is affecting their life.	
		<b>ODI scoring</b>	
		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 to 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 to 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 to 80%: Crippled	Back pain impinges on all aspects of the patient's life. Positive intervention is required.
	81 to 100%: Bed bound	These patients are either bed-bound or exaggerating their symptoms. <b>Manage with urgency and aggressively. Avoid the negative effect of pain and disability.</b>	
Pain screening	<a href="#">VAS</a> , <a href="#">VRS</a> , and <a href="#">NRS</a>	The pain scale scoring will vary based on the tool used. Pain rating scales such as the Visual Analog Scale (VAS), Verbal Rating Scale (VRS), and Numeric Rating Scale (NRS) should be used in addition to the functional assessment and appropriate behavioral screening assessments. The pain rating tool should be used initially, and on follow-up visits, to assess the patient's perception of pain, and to assess if improvement has occurred.	

\*Fairbank JC, Pynsent PB. The Oswestry Disability Index. Spine 2000 Nov 15;25(22):2940-52; discussion 52.

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