



Musculoskeletal

Health information needs for low back pain

What health information needs are perceived by people with low back pain?

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One in ten people are experiencing low back pain at any point in time worldwide. Approximately 90% of low back pain cases have no identifiable pathoanatomical cause, and are called 'non-specific low back pain'.

There are a number of published national and international clinical guidelines to support the management of low back pain. Although many groups have developed these clinical practice guidelines for LBP management, they tend to contain relatively uniform recommendations incorporating best available evidence, clinician expertise and patients' preferences.

Education is recommended in most guidelines, but most guidelines do not specify what content should be included in patient education, leaving this open to interpretation and marked heterogeneity in the clinical approach.

Recently, a group of researchers searched for and summarised all the available evidence about what people with low back pain perceive they need with respect to health information and education.

From 41 studies on this topic, the authors gleaned that information needs of people with low back pain are centred around their desire for a diagnosis, potentially contributing to expectations for, and overuse of, imaging.

Patients expressed a strong desire for clear, consistent and personalised information on prognosis, treatment options and self-management strategies, related to healthcare and occupational issues.



To correct unhelpful beliefs and optimise delivery of evidence-based therapy, patient and health professional education, potentially by an integrated public health approach may be warranted.

Want to read deeper into this topic? Have a look at the free full text version of this article published in [Journal of Physiotherapy](#)!

> From: *Lim et al., J Physiother 65 (2019) 124-135 (Epub ahead of print). All rights reserved to Australian Physiotherapy Association. [Click here for the online summary.](#)*



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