



## Michigan Quality Improvement Consortium Clinical Practice Guideline Update Alert

Guideline: [Management of Acute Low Back Pain in Adults](#)

Released: March 2022

This alert provides a summary of only the recommendations which were updated. Refer to the complete guideline for all recommendations and level of evidence.

### Updated recommendations include:

**Revised:** “low back pain present for up to 6 weeks” to “low back pain of  $\leq$  4 weeks duration” based on most current guidelines from [Up To Date](#).

### Eligible population

- Change: from to “< 6 weeks duration” to “ $\leq$  4 weeks duration”

### Key Components

#### Red flags

- Added: Progressive and/or severe lower extremity neurologic deficits”.
- Deleted: “Acute dysesthesia or weakness of leg(s)”

### Recommendation and Level of Evidence

#### “Testing/Assessment”

- Added: “red flags, recent falls”
- Added: “for acute non-traumatic back pain”

#### Therapy

- Added: to Heat for painful areas “may reduce pain due to muscle spasm”
- Added: qualifier “spinal” to manual therapy
- Added: “Modalities such as traction, ultrasound, paraspinal injections or TENS are not effective”

#### Referral

- Changed: “If persistent” to “If pain and/or disability persists beyond 2 weeks, consider referral for physical therapy...”
- Deleted: “not modalities such as traction, ultrasound” in referral section, was added to therapy section
- Revised: time frame from 6 to 4 weeks in sentence “If pain and/or disability persists beyond 4 weeks, consider referral to a multidisciplinary back pain program,...”

### Identification and management

- Changed: “potential” to “suspected” serious pathology and
- Added: “based on red flags”

#### Cauda Equina

- Added “for emergent studies and definitive care”

## **Cancer**

- Deleted phrase “male with diffuse osteoporosis”
- Revised: - ESR/C reactive protein → C-reactive protein  $\pm$  ESR
- Deleted: “or CT” after “Consider MRI”

## **Infection**

- Added: hemodialysis
- Added: endocarditis
- Revised: - ESR/C reactive protein to C-reactive protein  $\pm$  ESR
- Deleted: “or CT” after “Consider MRI”

## **Spinal Fracture**

- Added: “older age group” [esp. women age > 50]
- Deleted: “history of” before “recent injury or cumulative trauma”
- Deleted: “history of” and added “prolonged” to “steroid therapy”

\*\*Updated referenced sources