



Low back pain and sciatica in over 16s: assessment and management NICE Guideline [NG59]

Date of latest update: 30 November 2016.

Patient group: People aged ≥ 16 years and suffering from low back pain and sciatica. **Intended audience:** Healthcare professionals, commissioners and providers of healthcare, people with low back pain or sciatica and their families. **Additional versions:** This is a replacement of the previous National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) clinical guideline CG88 (2009). **Expert working group:** A multidisciplinary Guideline Development Group (GDG) comprising health professionals, researchers and lay members developed this guideline. The committee membership was chaired by a consultant in pain medicine and consisted of 18 members, including 14 core members and four topic-expert members. **Funded by:** National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). **Consultation with:** Invited stakeholders representing: medicine, surgery, nursing, radiology, psychology, epidemiology and researchers. **Approved by:** National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). **Location:** The guidelines and additional documents are available on the NICE website: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng59>

Description: This guideline summarises the evidence and provides recommendations on three broad areas of low back pain and sciatica care. These areas include: assessment, non-invasive treatment and invasive treatment for low back pain and sciatica.

The assessment recommendations cover: alternative diagnoses, risk assessment and risk stratification tools and imaging. The non-invasive treatment recommendations cover: non-pharmacological interventions (self-management, exercise, orthotics, manual therapies, acupuncture, electrotherapies, psychological therapy, combined physical and psychological programmes and return-to-work programs) and pharmacological interventions. The invasive treatment recommendations cover: non-surgical interventions (spinal injections, radiofrequency denervation and epidural) and surgical interventions (spinal decompression, spinal fusion, disc replacement and prognostic factors). The guideline's recommendations regarding assessment and non-invasive treatments are most relevant to physiotherapists.

The website provides a large amount of information in a number of different formats. There is an 18-page summary of the key recommendations as well as much longer and more detailed summaries and appendices. There are separate tabs for tools and resources, information for the public, and evidence. You can also engage with the guidelines via an interactive flowchart; <https://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/low-back-pain-and-sciatica>.

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