Positive and negative evidence of risk factors for back disorders

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Abstract: The scientific literature on work-related back disorders was reviewed to identify consistent risk factors and to determine the strength of the association between the two. Thirty-five publications were selected with quantitative information. Lifting or carrying loads, whole-body vibration, and frequent bending and twisting proved to be the physical load risk factors consistently associated with work-related back disorders. Job dissatisfaction and low job decision latitude proved to be important, but the evidence was not consistent across different studies and study designs. The epidemiologic studies illustrated the importance of several confounders, especially age, smoking habits, and education. In this review, gender, height, weight, exercise, and marital status were consistently not associated with back disorders in occupational populations.

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