



Chiropractic Care and Work Disability

“Early Predictors of Chronic Work Disability: A Prospective, Population-based Study of Workers with Back Injuries”

Turner, JA, Franklin G., Fulton-Kehoe, D. May 26-31 2008. Geneva.

Objective:

Interviewed 1,885 injured workers 3 weeks after they filed a claim for a job-related back injury, identifying several key risk factors that were early predictors of long term disability.

Method:

Results & Conclusions:

- Patients who had high scores on the Roland-Morris Disability Questionnaire in the first few weeks after a work-related back injury were at high risk for not having returned to work one year later.
- Among other factors, the study identified as strong early predictors of long term disability after work-related back injuries – radiculopathy at baseline.
- Another predictor for chronic disability was having an employer who did not offer the injured worker a job accommodation to facilitate early RTW such as reduced hours or lighter duty work.
- Having widespread pain early after injury was a risk factor for chronic disability
- Patients whose first visit for the injury was to a chiropractor had reduced odds of chronic disability.
- “That at least raises the possibility that chiropractic care was more effective in improving pain and disability or promoting return to work.”
- History of episodes of back pain in the past was not in itself a predictor but if previous back pain resulted in being out of work one month or more, it was a risk factor.