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A review of relationship between fear avoidance beliefs and postural stability in non-specific chronic low back pain

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Statement of the Problem: Low Back Pain (LBP) is one of the most prevalent diseases in most developed and developing countries, affecting 70 to 80% of adults at some time during their lives. Recent evidence suggests that psychosocial factors Especially Fear-Avoidance Beliefs (FAB) are important in predicting patients who will progress from an acute to a chronic stage as well as failure of interventions. The aim of this study is to review the relationship between fear avoidance beliefs and postural stability in non-specific Chronic Low Back Pain (CLBP).

Method: In this narrative article we have searched PubMed, CINHAL, APTA and MEDLINE data bases. The key words included, chronic low back pain, fear avoidance beliefs, posture, stability, balance, motor control, center of pressure and force plate. The inclusion criteria were being related to FAB and postural stability and adults with non-specific CLBP in English language up to 2013, regardless of their study design.

Result: The results showed that psychological factors such as FAB influence the chronicity of LBP, a group of studies indicated that FAB is related to pain and disability. Another group of studies indicated that postural stability is related to pain and disability. The only study on the relationship between postural stability and FAB did not found any significant relationship.

Conclusion: FAB is related to pain and disability. Postural stability is related to pain and disability. More studies with stronger methodology such as larger population with control group are needed for evaluating the relationship of FAB and postural control.

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