

Fear-Avoidance Beliefs Questionnaire (FABQ) for Patients with Back Pain

Overview:

The Fear-Avoidance Beliefs Questionnaire (FABQ) can help measure how much fear and avoidance are affecting a patient with low back pain. This can help identify those patients for whom psychosocial interventions may be beneficial. The authors are from the Western Infirmary in Glasgow (Scotland) and the Hope Hospital in Salford (England).

NOTE: This scale can be modified to apply to patients with other types of chronic pain. Only items 3 and 11 mention "back".

Instructions: Here are some of the things which other patients have told us about their pain. For each statement please circle the number from 0 to 6 to say how much physical activities such as bending lifting walking or driving affect or would affect your back pain.

Statements:

- (1) My pain is caused by physical activity.
- (2) Physical activity makes my pain worse.
- (3) Physical activity might harm my back.
- (4) I should not do physical activities which (might) make my pain worse.
- (5) I cannot do physical activities which (might) make my pain worse.

The following statements are about how your normal work affects or would affect you back pain:

- (6) My pain was caused by my work or by an accident at work.
- (7) My work aggravated my pain.
- (8) I have a claim for compensation for my pain.
- (9) My work is too heavy for me.
- (10) My work makes or would make my pain worse.
- (11) My work might harm my back.
- (12) I should not do my normal work with my present pain.
- (13) I cannot do my normal work with my present pain.
- (14) I cannot do my normal work till my pain is treated.
- (15) I do not think that I will be back to my normal work within 3 months.
- (16) I do not think that I will ever be able to go back to that work.

Response	Points
completely disagree	0
	1
	2
unsure	3
	4
	5
completely agree	6

fear-avoidance beliefs about work (scale 1) =

= (points for item 6) + (points for item 7) + (points for item 9) + (points for item 10) + (points for item 11) + (points for item 12) + (points for item 15)

fear-avoidance beliefs about physical activity (scale 2) =

= (points for item 2) + (points for item 3) + (points for item 4) + (points for item 5)

items not in scale 1 or 2: 1 8 13 14 16

Interpretation:

- minimal scale scores: 0
- maximum scale 1 score: 42 (7 items)
- maximum scale 2 score: 24 (4 items)
- The higher the scale scores the greater the degree of fear and avoidance beliefs shown by the patient.

Performance:

- Internal consistency (alpha) 0.88 for scale 1 and 0.77 for scale 2

References:

Waddell G Newton M et al. A Fear-Avoidance Beliefs Questionnaire (FABQ) and the role of fear-avoidance beliefs in chronic low back pain and disability. Pain. 1993; 52: 157-168 (Appendix page 166).