



Management of adults patients consulting their general practitioner for low back pain

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Résumé en
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Background: Low back pain (LBP) is a major public health problem, and one of the most frequent reasons for encounter in general practice. In France, we are lacking data on management of LBP by the general practitioners (GP).

Research question: The aim of this ongoing study is to describe the management of patients from 18 to 65 consulting their GP for LBP.

Method: Ecogen is a French national descriptive study, undertaken in 128 different offices of general practice in 2012. One day by week, for all the consultations, all the reasons for encounter, the diagnosis and the procedures implemented by the GPs were recorded according to the International Classification of Primary Care (ICPC-2). All patients from 18 to 65 seeking care for LBP were selected. Then the population and all the diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive and administrative procedures related to these consultations were described. Finally, some typical associations of procedures were looked for, and compared according to the characteristics of the patients and of the GPs.

Results: About 650 consultations will probably be selected. As suggested by international literature, prescriptions of radiological exams, drugs, physiotherapy, sick leave and occupational disease certifications may represent the main part of the procedures implemented by the GP.

Conclusions: This study will provide a more accurate assessment of the use of these procedures in general practice in France, and might lead to more original results, as the use of prevention and health education or the rate of referrals of patients to specialists or other health care providers.

Points for discussion: Is the management of patients with low back pain the same in our different countries? Do you use ICPC2 routinely to describe your practice?

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