

Back pain is common in highly active older adults

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Volunteer wearing portable metabolic analyzer while performing test to measure energetic cost of walking-Credit-National Institute on Aging. Credit: *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*

In a *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* study, many well-functioning and highly active older adults experienced back pain, which

was linked with poorer perceived and observed walking endurance.

"Older adults are living longer and healthier active lives, so paying attention to conditions that may threaten independent function is increasingly important," said lead author Dr. Eleanor Simonsick, of the National Institute on Aging. "In this study, we found that back pain affected nearly half of well-functioning, highly active older adults. We also found that back pain was linked to less energy efficient walking and poorer endurance, which can lead to walking difficulties. These findings suggest that better back pain management may help [older adults](#) remain active and free of mobility limitation."

The authors noted that it will be important to study whether back [pain](#) may serve as a catalyst for future loss of mobility in active older individuals.

More information: Eleanor M. Simonsick et al, Lumbopelvic Pain and Threats to Walking Ability in Well-Functioning Older Adults: Findings from the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.15280](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.15280)

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