

The Core Outcome Measures Index for the back (COMI-back) is a brief instrument developed to evaluate the multidimensional impact of back problems, by assessing the main outcomes of importance to patients (pain, function, symptom-specific well-being, quality of life, disability). It is based on the items proposed by an expert group for inclusion in a standardized set of short outcome measures for use in the clinical routine, quality management and research [1] and representing domains considered relevant in a more recent re-evaluation [2]. The items were subject to validation in two independent studies [3, 4] and, with the addition of a general quality of life item and a composite index score, the questionnaire was later proposed as an instrument in its own right, known as the "COMI" [5]. It has been cross-culturally adapted and validated for use in many different languages [6-21], and has shown good psychometric properties. It is the outcome instrument of choice for back patients in the EUROSPINE international spine registry, "Spine Tango" [22-25]. With just one question per domain, the COMI enables the efficient assessment of large numbers of patients, with minimal respondent and administrative burden. It has also been modified for use in patients with neck problems [26-28]. The simple scoring of the COMI is shown in Mannion et al. [29] and Pochon et al. [30].

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