

SAA's Screening Tool for ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS

The Spondylitis Association of America (SAA) has developed a scientifically validated screening tool that will help evaluate an individual's likelihood of having AS. You can find the research article in *Arthritis Care and Research*, Vol. 62, No.1, January 15, 2010, pp 19-27.

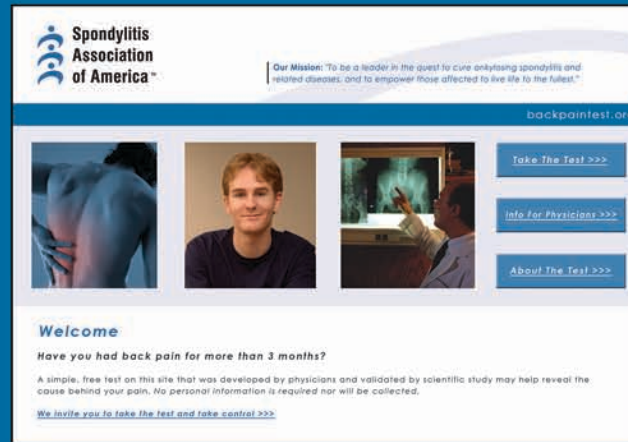
The 10-question screening tool is completely anonymous and confidential. Patients will never be asked to identify themselves, nor will any personal information be captured or stored. The Screening Tool for AS is located at www.BackPainTest.org.



RHEUMATOLOGY RESOURCES:

SAA has compiled a Member Recommended List of Rheumatologists provided to us by SAA members and spondylitis patients. Patients can contact the SAA by telephone at (800) 777-8189 or by email at info@spondylitis.org to request a copy.

The American College of Rheumatology has a list of rheumatologists on their website www.rheumatology.org



www.BackPainTest.org

Take the Test.

And take control.



www.spondylitis.org
(800) 777-8189
info@spondylitis.org

The Spondylitis Association of America was the first, and remains the largest resource in the U.S. for people affected by ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases. For more than 25 years, SAA has dedicated all of its resources to funding research and programs that directly benefit the spondylitis community.

Inflammatory Back Pain vs. Mechanical Back Pain



BackPainTest.org



Has your patient had
BACK PAIN for more
than ***3 MONTHS?***



INFLAMMATORY BACK PAIN IS A HALLMARK OF ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS (AS)

Most cases of AS can be diagnosed, or at least initially suspected, based on a good history and clinical examination. And yet, delays and failures in diagnosis persist.

YOU CAN HELP prevent this delay in diagnosis by distinguishing inflammatory back pain due to spondylitis from mechanical back pain.



LOOK FOR SIGNS THAT STRENGTHEN THE DIAGNOSIS

SITES OF INFLAMMATION – Spondylitis primarily affects cartilaginous joints and entheses, where ligaments, joint capsules and tendons attach to bone, primarily in the spine. Check for pain and tenderness to palpation along the back, pelvic bones, sacroiliac joints, chest and heels.

LIMITED MOBILITY – Check for limitation of spinal mobility in all directions and for any restriction of chest expansion.

X-RAY EVIDENCE OF INFLAMMATION – Spondylitis typically begins with inflammation of the sacroiliac joints (sacroiliitis). A presumptive clinical diagnosis of spondylitis can be confirmed by finding erosions and/or narrowing or fusion of the sacroiliac joints on standard AP radiographic views of the pelvis. However, x-rays can be normal in early disease in some patients.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO LOOK FOR:

Onset is usually under 35 years of age and is insidious

Pain persists for more than three months (i.e., it is chronic)

The back pain and stiffness worsen with immobility, especially at night and early morning

The back pain and stiffness tend to ease with physical activity and exercise

NSAIDs are very effective in relieving pain and stiffness in most patients

INFLAMMATORY BACK PAIN ALONE IS NOT DIAGNOSTIC

Inflammatory back pain by itself should not be used to diagnose ankylosing spondylitis. Instead it is a very important characteristic which the physician considers along with other findings such as x-ray or MRI evidence of sacroiliitis, the detection of the gene marker HLA B27, or the history of another related physical finding such as Iritis.

www.BackPainTest.org

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAIN ASSOCIATED WITH INFLAMMATORY BACK PAIN

> Inflammatory back pain is usually a dull ache, difficult to localize, and felt deep in the buttock or lower back. The back pain is frequently associated with stiffness and spasm of the paraspinal muscles.

> Prolonged inactivity usually worsens the pain and stiffness. Pain may awaken the patient at night. Some patients find it necessary to exercise or move about for a few minutes before returning to bed, and may have considerable difficulty in getting out of bed in the morning. Hot showers help minimize the pain and stiffness.