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[Spine \(Phila Pa 1976\)](#). 2000 Nov 15;25(22):2940-52; discussion 2952.

## The Oswestry Disability Index.

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### Abstract

**STUDY DESIGN:** The Oswestry Disability Index (ODI) has become one of the principal condition-specific outcome measures used in the management of spinal disorders. This review is based on publications using the ODI identified from the authors' personal databases, the Science Citation Index, and hand searches of Spine and current textbooks of spinal disorders.

**OBJECTIVES:** To review the versions of this instrument, document methods by which it has been validated, collate data from scores found in normal and back pain populations, provide curves for power calculations in studies using the ODI, and maintain the ODI as a gold standard outcome measure.

**SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND DATA:** It has now been 20 years since its original publication. More than 200 citations exist in the Science Citation Index. The authors have a large correspondence file relating to the ODI, that is cited in most of the large textbooks related to spinal disorders.

**METHODS:** All the published versions of the questionnaire were identified. A systematic review of this literature was made. The various reports of validation were collated and related to a version.

**RESULTS:** Four versions of the ODI are available in English and nine in other languages. Some published versions contain misprints, and many omit the scoring system. At least 114 studies contain usable data. These data provide both validation and standards for other users and indicate the power of the instrument for detecting change in sample populations.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The ODI remains a valid and vigorous measure and has been a worthwhile outcome measure. The process of using the ODI is reviewed and should be the subject of further research. The receiver operating characteristics should be explored in a population with higher self-report disabilities. The behavior of the instrument is incompletely understood, particularly in sensitivity to real change.

### Comment in

[The use of revised Oswestry Disability Questionnaire.](#) [Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2000]

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