

Red Flags

1. Significant physical trauma, particularly falls from a height
2. Bladder or bowel dysfunction or saddle area sensory disturbance
3. Increasing objective neurological deficit
4. Pain at rest, particularly at night especially if patient gets up and walks around
5. Depression
6. Narcotic use; alcohol abuse
7. Anger and blame
8. “Catastrophiser”
9. New patient who tells you that he/she has heard “you are a good (or the best) doctor” and/or “nothing has helped”
10. 3 or more positive signs of psychological distress (generally not in first few weeks)
11. Requesting opioids (or benzodiazepines)

Waddell Signs

Group 1 Over-Reaction (exaggeration)

- a). Grimacing, clutching at body, leaning on furniture, verbal expressions of distress
- b). Exaggerated slowness & incomplete movements

Group 2 Pain with Simulated Forces

- a). Simulated Axial Loading
- b). Simulated Rotation

Group 3 Atypical Tenderness

- a). Superficial
- b). Widespread

Group 4 Regional Discrepancy

- a). Multiple but non physiological weakness
- b). Muscles giving way during examination
- c). Non physiological sensory deficits

Group 5 Distraction

- a). Straight leg raise
 - Supine
 - Long Sitting
 - Prone over bench