Imaging tests for low back pain

Numbers for adults with a mean age of 43 years and low back pain that lasted less than six weeks or six to twelve weeks, who either did or did not receive imaging tests (X-ray, CT scan, MRI). Patients were observed for up to 24 months.

100 people without imaging tests*

How many patients with low back pain reported a general long-term improvement?**

50

Remaining patients

100 people with imaging tests

43

*In some studies patients received imaging tests as part of their primary health care.
**The indicated difference is not relevant for clinical practice because improvements were very low and patients rarely experienced any benefits.


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