

[IMAGE]

## Are You Suffering From the #1 Cause of Worldwide Disability?

By Editorial Staff

Are you suffering from back or neck pain? You're definitely not alone, and we mean on a global scale. A series of studies emerging from the Global Burden of Disease 2010 Project, a massive collaboration between the World Health Organization, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, the University of Queensland School of Population Health, Harvard School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the University of Tokyo, Imperial College London, clarifies the worldwide health burden of musculoskeletal conditions, particularly back and neck pain, in crystal-clear fashion, with low back pain identified as the number-one cause of disability worldwide and neck pain the number-four cause. Overall, musculoskeletal conditions represent the second leading cause of global disability.

Findings emphasize the shift in global health that has resulted from disability making an increasingly larger footprint on the burden of disease compared to a mere 20-30 years ago. In addition, while more people are living longer, the flip side is that they do so with an increasing risk of living with the burden of pain, disability and disease compared to generations past.

Dr. Scott Haldeman, a neurologist and doctor of chiropractic, provides a summary of the project's findings that should make it abundantly clear that conditions many people may consider relatively harmless actually have tremendous potential for long-term health consequences:

- Musculoskeletal conditions such as low back pain, neck pain and arthritis affect more than 1.7 billion people worldwide and have a greater impact on the health of the world population (death and disability) than HIV/AIDS, tropical diseases including malaria, the forces of war and nature, and all neurological conditions combined.
- world epidemic - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark When considering death and disability in the health equation, musculoskeletal disorders cause 21.3 percent of all years lived with disability (YLDs), second only to mental and behavioral disorders, which account for 22.7 percent of YLDs.
- Musculoskeletal conditions represent the sixth leading cause of death and disability, with only cardiovascular and circulatory diseases, neonatal diseases, neoplasms, and mental and behavioral disorders accounting for more death and disability worldwide.

- Low back pain is the most dominant musculoskeletal condition, accounting for nearly one-half of all musculoskeletal YLDs. Neck pain accounts for one-fifth of musculoskeletal YLDs.
- Low back pain is the sixth most important contributor to the global disease burden (death and disability), and has a greater impact on global health than malaria, preterm birth complications, COPD, tuberculosis, diabetes or lung cancer.
- When combined with neck pain (21st most important contributor to the global disease burden – death and disability), painful spinal disorders are second only to ischemic heart disease in terms of their impact on the global burden of disease. Spinal disorders have a greater impact than HIV/AIDS, malaria, lower respiratory infections, stroke, breast and lung cancer combined, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, depression or traffic injuries.
- Current estimates suggest that 632.045 million people worldwide suffer from low back pain and 332.049 million people worldwide suffer from neck pain.

"The Global Burden of Disease Study provides indisputable evidence that musculoskeletal conditions are an enormous and emerging problem in all parts of the world and need to be given the same priority for policy and resources as other major conditions like cancer, mental health and cardiovascular disease," said Dr. Haldeman.

The seven studies from Global Burden of Disease 2010, as well as accompanying commentaries, appear in *The Lancet*. To review the studies and all relevant material, [click here](#). And by the way, when it comes to preventing and treating musculoskeletal issues, particularly back and neck pain, [chiropractic care](#) has been shown in numerous research studies to be an effective conservative option.

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