

Phase 1: State the review question (this has been filled in for the current review)

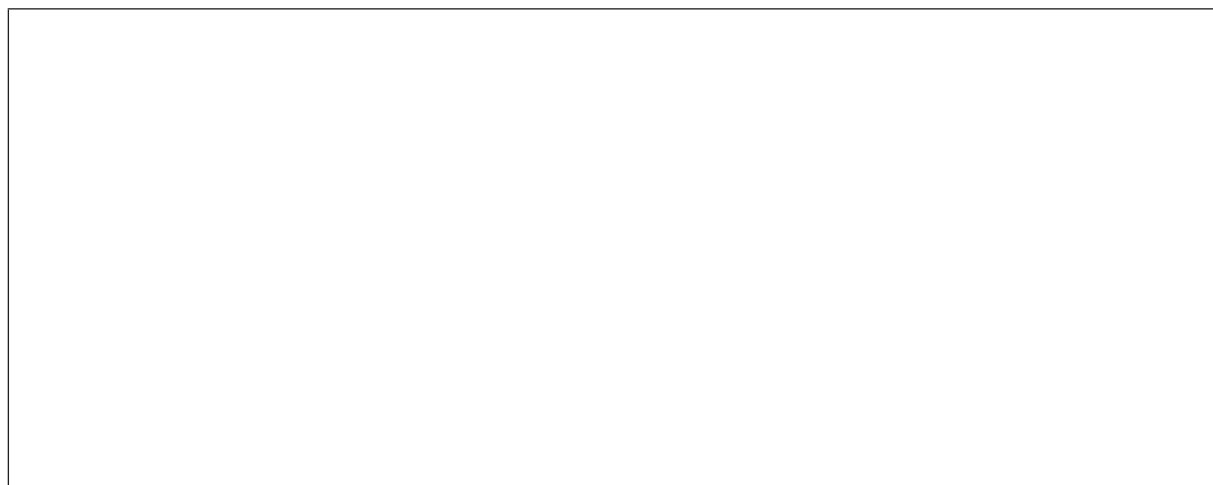
Patients: Patients with lower back pain and radiculopathy (or sciatica) with non-congruent imaging and clinical findings who might benefit from lumbar decompression surgery

Index test: Selective Nerve Root Block including injection of anaesthetic close to the lumbar nerve root under guidance by fluoroscopy or other imaging

Target condition: Radiculopathy (or sciatica) amenable to surgery

Reference standard: Outcome following surgery

Phase 2: Draw a flow diagram for the primary study



QUADAS-2 is structured so that four key domains are each rated in terms of the risk of bias and the concern regarding applicability to the research question (as defined above). Each key domain has a set of signalling questions to help reach the judgements regarding bias and applicability. There is also an optional domain for reviews that evaluate multiple index tests which should be assessed if patients were randomised to different index tests or if individual patients received multiple index tests.

Phase 3: Risk of bias and applicability judgements

DOMAIN 1: PATIENT SELECTION

A. Risk of Bias

Describe methods of patient selection:

- Was a consecutive or random sample of patients enrolled? Yes/No/Unclear
- Was a case-control design avoided? Yes/No/Unclear
- Did the study avoid inappropriate exclusions? Yes/No/Unclear

Could the selection of patients have introduced bias?

RISK: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

B. Concerns regarding applicability

Describe included patients (prior testing, presentation, intended use of index test and setting):

Are there concerns that the included patients do not match the review question?

CONCERN: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

DOMAIN 2: INDEX TEST(S)

If more than one index test was used, please complete for each test.

A. Risk of Bias

Describe the index test and how it was conducted and interpreted:

- Were the index test results interpreted without knowledge of the results of the reference standard? Yes/No/Unclear
- If a threshold was used, was it pre-specified? Yes/No/Unclear

Could the conduct or interpretation of the index test have introduced bias?

RISK: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

B. Concerns regarding applicability

Are there concerns that the index test, its conduct, or interpretation differ from the review question?

CONCERN: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

DOMAIN 3: REFERENCE STANDARD

A. Risk of Bias

Describe the reference standard and how it was conducted and interpreted:

- Is the reference standard likely to correctly classify the target condition? Yes/No/Unclear
- Were the reference standard results interpreted without knowledge of the results of the index test? Yes/No/Unclear

Could the reference standard, its conduct, or its interpretation have introduced bias?

RISK: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

B. Concerns regarding applicability

Are there concerns that the target condition as defined by the reference standard does not match the review question?

CONCERN: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR

DOMAIN 4: FLOW AND TIMING

A. Risk of Bias

Describe any patients who did not receive the index test(s) and/or reference standard or who were excluded from the 2 × 2 table (refer to flow diagram):

Describe the time interval and any interventions between index test(s) and reference standard:

- Was there an appropriate interval between index test(s) and reference standard? Yes/No/Unclear
- Did all patients receive a reference standard? Yes/No/Unclear
- Did patients receive the same reference standard? Yes/No/Unclear
- Were all patients included in the analysis? Yes/No/Unclear

Could the patient flow have introduced bias?

RISK: LOW/HIGH/UNCLEAR