

Most people have “abnormal” findings on MRI scans. Often these findings are irrelevant and not harmful.

Prevalence of “Degenerative” Spine Imaging Findings in **ASYMPTOMATIC** Populations

Brinjikji, W., et al.,
Am J Neuroradiol 2015; 36:811-6

IMAGE FINDING	AGE						
	20	30	40	50	60	70	80
Disc Degeneration	37%	52%	68%	80%	88%	93%	96%
Disc Signal Loss	17%	33%	54%	73%	86%	94%	97%
Disc Height Loss	24%	34%	45%	56%	67%	76%	84%
Disc Bulge	30%	40%	50%	60%	69%	77%	84%
Disc Protrusion	29%	31%	33%	36%	38%	40%	43%
Annular Fissure	19%	20%	22%	23%	25%	27%	29%
Facet Degeneration	4%	9%	18%	32%	50%	69%	83%
Spondylolisthesis	3%	5%	8%	14%	23%	35%	50%

Anatomic Spinal Stenosis in the General Population Age 43 - 93 Years

Ishimoto Y., et al.,
Osteoarthritis and Cartilage
2013; 21:783-788

78%	30%	17.5%	82%
Moderate to Severe Stenosis	Severe Stenosis	People with Severe Anatomic Stenosis WITH Symptoms	People with Severe Anatomic Stenosis WITHOUT Symptoms