

# Assessing axSpA

## What You Need To Know

Understanding your axial spondyloarthritis (axSpA) and being involved in treatment decisions are key steps towards improved control of your disease.

Regular assessments are important to track and understand your disease activity. Knowledge about assessment tools can help you to have a more informed conversation with your doctor and make a difference in how you manage your axSpA.

### How is axSpA disease activity measured?

Disease activity captures the level of some of the key symptoms experienced by patients, for example, pain, fatigue, joint swelling and morning stiffness as well as inflammation in your blood.<sup>1</sup>

The most common measurements tools used by rheumatologists are the **Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index (BASDAI)** and the **Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Score (ASDAS)**.<sup>2</sup>



#### BASDAI

Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Index



The BASDAI measures the activity of the disease based on your answers to six questions related to **fatigue, spinal pain, peripheral joint pain/swelling, areas of localised tenderness, and duration and severity of morning stiffness**.<sup>3</sup>



A higher BASDAI score reflects higher disease activity.<sup>4</sup>



If your BASDAI score is equal or above 4, it indicates that your disease is not adequately controlled and switching therapy could be discussed with your physician.<sup>4</sup>

#### ASDAS

Ankylosing Spondylitis Disease Activity Score



The ASDAS assessment includes three of the BASDAI questions (around spinal pain, duration of morning stiffness and joint pain/swelling), your overall assessment of your disease, and the objective level of inflammation, measured in your blood (C-reactive protein [CRP]).<sup>5</sup>

An ASDAS score of **under 2.1** is considered low disease activity and is an important target in disease control.<sup>6,7</sup>

**Between 2.1 and 3.5** is interpreted as high disease activity.<sup>6,7</sup>

**Over 3.5** is very high disease activity.<sup>6,7</sup>



A reduction of at least 1.1 from your previous ASDAS score is considered a clinically important improvement, a change of at least 2.0 units is a "major improvement".<sup>6</sup> These improvements are likely to be reflected in your overall quality of life.<sup>8</sup>

#### CRP

Inflammation can be measured through the level of C-reactive protein (CRP) in your blood, which increases when there is inflammation in your body.<sup>9</sup> A simple blood test can be done to check your CRP level.

Generally, CRP levels below 5 mg/L are considered normal.<sup>10</sup>

CRP is considered as part of the ASDAS measurement. Rheumatologists may also consider it alongside using the BASDAI.<sup>4</sup>



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