

AMA Criteria for When to Use the Range of Motion (ROM) Method to Determine Impairment in a Patient with a Spinal Disorder

Overview:

The Range of Motion (ROM) method can be used to evaluate a patient with permanent impairment of the spine when certain features are present. In the absence of these findings the diagnosis-related estimates (DRE) method should be used.

Requirement: The patient is at the maximal medical improvement (MMI) level.

The ROM method can be used if:

- (1) there are fractures at more than 1 level in the spine
- (2) bilateral radiculopathy
- (3) radiculopathy at more than 1 level in the same spinal region
- (4) multi-level motion segment alteration in the same spinal region
- (5) recurrent disk herniation or stenosis with radiculopathy at the same or a different level in the same spinal region
- (6) the spinal disorder is related to illness rather than injury
- (7) recurrent injury at the same level

References:

Cocchiarella L Andersson GBJ (editors). Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment Fifth Edition. American Medical Association. 2001. page 380-381; Figure 15-4 page 380.