

OASIS Alert

Test Your OASIS Savvy ...Education: Cane May Not Relieve Pain

Question: How do you answer M0420 (Frequency of pain interfering with patient's activity or movement) if the patient has low back pain when ambulating, and uses a cane to manage the pain?

- A) Because he has to ambulate daily, you choose "2" (Daily, but not constantly).
- B) The cane allows him to ambulate, so you choose "0" (Patient has no pain or pain does not interfere with activity or movement).
- C) It depends on how effective the cane is.

Answer: C. Using a cane does not necessarily "interfere" with the patient's activity, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** explains in Question 71 of the OASIS questions and answers added in June 2005.

If the cane adequately relieves the pain so the patient can ambulate without significant limits in distance or task performance, then "0" could be the correct answer. But if the pain continues even with the use of the cane--and even with a cane the patient limits ambulation or requires assistance--you need to assess the frequency with which the pain interferes with his movement or activities, CMS instructs.

Note: For CMS' Q&As go to www.qtso.com/hhdownload.html, scroll down to OASIS and click on Q&As.