SF-36 PROFILES BEFORE AND ONE YEAR AFTER SPINAL STENOSIS SURGERY –
A PROSPECTIVE COMPARISON OF TWO TECHNIQUES IN TWO NATIONS
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Background
The standard surgical treatment of central spinal stenosis is decompressive laminectomy with or without fusion. An alternative treatment proposed is the indirect widening of the spinal canal by means of an interspinous distraction device, X-Stop, which is inserted under local anaesthesia. Both the ongoing FDA study on the X-Stop device and the Swedish national lumbar spine register utilise the SF-36 score for evaluating the outcome of surgical treatment.

Aim of the study
To compare the one year outcome using the SF-36 scores after X-Stop distraction in 90 patients operated on in the US (X group) with the scores after decompressive surgery in 90 patients operated on in Lund, Sweden (D group).

Patients
Both patient cohorts are included in prospective studies. Patients aged ≥50 years of age presenting with spinal claudication with or without back pain and scheduled for surgery were included.

Methods
The X group was operated on in one of 9 centers in the US included in a prospective FDA study. The D group was operated on in one university unit in Sweden. Both patient groups completed the SF-36 score prior to surgery and at one year follow-up.

Results
Mean age X group: 69 y, D group 66 y. Sex distribution was comparable. The preoperative SF-36 scores for X and D groups showed similar mean values except for GH and RE domains, which were higher (>10%) for the X group.
The postoperative scores were improved for both groups in all domains except GH. Mean postoperative scores improved more markedly (>10%) for X group in the other physical domains and in SF and RE

Conclusion
1. Patients selected for surgery for spinal stenosis in the US and Sweden seem to have a similar health related quality of life as judged by the SF-36 score.
2. Both surgical treatments improved HRQoL as described by SF-36 one year postoperatively, although the 1-year improvement seems to be more pronounced in the X-Stop group.