

Table 2

Red flags

- Age of onset > 50 years or < 20 years
- Night pain disturbing sleep
- Previous history of malignancy
- Thoracic back pain
- Systemic symptoms (weight loss, fevers and night sweats)
- Neurological symptoms, especially sphincter disturbance
- Non-mechanical pain (i.e. no relief with bed rest)
- Drug abuse, immunosuppression and HIV infection