**Chronic pain devastating the lives of nearly 30 MILLION Brits**

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**Problems like lower back pain or osteoarthritis is impacting nearly half the adult population, with women most likely to suffer**

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Chronic pain is having a devastating impact on 28 million Brits, new research has revealed.

Problems like low [back pain](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/back-pain) or [osteoarthritis](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/osteoarthritis) impact on the lives of between 35% and 51% of British adults, according to the study.

And women are more likely than men to suffer from the issue.

It is the first time experts have ever been able to put a figure on how many people live with long term pain in the UK.

Overall, experts estimated that 43% of adults have pain that has lasted for more than three months.

They said the problem is “a major cause of disability” and “distress” among those affected by it, and they warned that the numbers affected are only likely to get bigger with an ageing population.

Their study, published in the journal BMJ Open, saw experts examine data from 19 studies including almost 140,000 UK adults.

They found that chronic pain prevalence increased with age, with around one in seven adults under 25 reporting chronic pain compared to almost two-thirds of people over 75.

Among 18 to 25 year olds, the prevalence was 14%, although it may be as high as 30% among 18-39 year olds, according to the study.

Among those aged 75 and above, the prevalence was almost two thirds (62%).

Lead author Dr Alan Fayaz, of Imperial College London, said: “Chronic pain affects between one third and one half of the population of the UK, corresponding to just under 28 million adults, based on data from the best available published studies.

An ageing population could cause the problem to get worse

“Chronic pain prevalence rises steadily with increasing age, affecting up to 62% of the population over the age of 75, suggesting that the burden of chronic pain may increase further still, in line with an ageing population.”

Experts on Monday night warned chronic pain was having a “devastating impact” on the lives of millions of Brits.

Olivia Belle, director of external affairs at Arthritis Research UK, said: “This is an important study, which starkly shows the devastating impact that chronic pain is having on people in the UK. As our population continues to age and obesity rates rise, we are only going to see these numbers grow.

“And although we may not be able to see it, living in pain, day in and day out, can have a devastating impact on people’s lives, affecting their independence, mobility and ability to stay in work.

“There is also, unsurprisingly, a direct link between chronic pain and depression. If we are going to address this growing need, we need better pain management and better treatments to relieve pain.”