[Chronic pain, pain disease, and satisfaction of patients with pain treatment in Germany: Results of a representative population survey].

Abstract: There are only few data from representative samples of the general German population on the prevalence of a "pain disease" and on satisfaction with pain therapy of persons with chronic pain available. A cross-sectional survey with people aged ≥ 14 years representative for the German population was conducted in 2013. Measures were obtained for presence of chronic pain (based on the definition of the International Association for the Study of Pain) and for "pain disease" by the presence of disabling pain in the Chronic Pain Grade Questionnaire and increased psychological distress in the Patient Health Questionnaire 4. In case of chronic pain reports, the satisfaction with current pain treatment and current treatment by a pain specialist were assessed. Responses were received from 2508 (57.5%) of the 4360 people contacted. The prevalence of chronic pain was 26.9% [95% confidence interval (CI) 25.2-28.6%]. A total of 7.4% (95% CI 5.0-9.9%) met the criteria for chronic disabling nonmalignant pain, while 2.8% (95% CI 2.2-3.4%) of participants met the criteria of a pain disease. In all, 31.9% of persons with disabling pain reported current treatment by a pain specialist and 33.1% of persons with disabling pain were (very) dissatisfied with current pain treatment. Treatment by a pain specialist was associated with higher health care use and lower treatment satisfaction. There is a need to
improve the care of persons with chronic disabling pain. Whether pain specialist treatment is (cost) effective in chronic disabling pain needs to be examined by longitudinal studies.