

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale – 21 (DASS-21)

Assessment Overview

Assessment Area

ICF Domain:

Body Function

Subcategory:

Mental Functions

Subscales:

Depression, anxiety, stress (7 items each)

You Will Need

Length:

10 minutes, 21 items

Scoring:

Items scored 0-3. Subscale scores are the sums of respective items multiplied by 2. Higher score represents greater distress

Training:

None, but training in psychological sciences and reading the manual is helpful.

Summary

The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) is a screening tool for identifying, differentiating and assessing depression, anxiety, and stress. The DASS-21 is the short form of the DASS-42 (or DASS).

The DASS-21 contains 21 items, divided into three 7-item subscales, where each item is a statement referring to the past week.

Availability

Worksheet: Can be found [here](#).

Languages: English, Portuguese, Arabic and Cantonese

Assessment Interpretability

Minimal Clinically Important Difference

Not established in SCI

Statistical Error

Not established in SCI

Typical Values

Mean (SD) Scores:

Depression subscale: 7.8 (9.33)

Anxiety subscale: 6.4 (5.87)

Stress subscale: 10.4 (10.00)

(Mitchell et al. 2008; n=40, 30 males, 10 females; 26 paraplegia, 14 tetraplegia; mean time since injury: 113.9 months)

Threshold Values:

Not established in SCI; but for the general population, scores for normal/mild/moderate/severe/extremely severe defined as:

Depression:

0-9/10-13/14-20/21-27/28-42

Anxiety:

0-7/8-9/10-14/15-19/20-42

Stress:

0-14/15-18/19-25/26-33/34-42

(Lovibond & Lovibond 1995b; Manual for the Depression Anxiety & Stress Scales. (2nd Ed.))

Normative Data:
Available from the manual, which must be purchased

Measurement Properties

Validity – **Moderate** to **High**

High correlation between DASS-21 Depression subscale and Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)

Depression scale:

$r = 0.70$

High correlation between DASS-21 Anxiety subscale and BSI Anxiety scale:

$r = 0.61$

(Mitchell et al. 2008; n=40, 30 males, 10 females; 26 paraplegia, 14 tetraplegia; mean time since injury: 113.9 months)

Moderate to High inverse correlation with Moorong Self-Efficacy Scale (MSES):

Depression scale: $r = - 0.63$

Anxiety scale: $r = - 0.54$

Stress scale: $r = - 0.58$

(Kilic et al. 2013; n=60; 41 males, 19 females; 41 incomplete, 18 complete; mean time since injury (SD): 5.7 (7.3) years)

Number of studies reporting validity data: 2

Reliability – **Not established**

Not established in SCI

Number of studies reporting reliability data: 0

Responsiveness

Floor/Ceiling Effect:

Not established in SCI

Effect Size:

Not established in SCI

Number of studies reporting

responsiveness data: 0