**Depression Anxiety Stress Scale – 21**

**Assessment Overview**

### Assessment Area

**ICF Domain:**
Body Function

**Subcategory:**
Mental Functions

**Subscales:**
Depression, anxiety, stress (7 items each)

### 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.

### 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.

### Availability

- [http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/dass/order.htm](http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/dass/order.htm)

**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, mixed injury types, mean time since injury=113.9 months)

**Threshold Values:**
Not established in SCI; but for the general population, scores for normal/mild/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:
Normative Data:
Available from the manual, which must be purchased
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Properties</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validity</strong> – <strong>Moderate to High</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reliability</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *High* correlation between DASS-21 Depression subscale and Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Depression scale:  
Correlation = 0.70 | Not established in SCI |
| *High* correlation between DASS-21 Anxiety subscale and BSI Anxiety scale:  
Correlation = 0.61 | **Number of studies reporting reliability data: 0** |
| *Moderate to High* inverse correlation with Moorong Self-Efficacy Scale (MSES):  
Depression scale: Correlation = -0.63  
Anxiety scale: Correlation = -0.54  
Stress scale: Correlation = -0.58 |  |
|  |  |
| (Mitchell et al. 2008; n=40, 30 males, mixed injury types, mean time since injury=113.9 months) |  |
|  |  |
| (Kilic et al. 2013; n=60, 41 males; mixed injury types, mean time since injury (SD) = 5.7 (7.3) years) |  |
| **DASS-21 Depression subscale:**  
Sensitivity = 57.0%  
Specificity = 76.0% |  |
| **DASS-21 Anxiety subscale:**  
Sensitivity = 86.0%  
Specificity = 64.0% |  |
| **Note:** diagnoses based on the Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview. |  |
| (Mitchell et al. 2008; n=40, 30 males, mixed injury types, mean time since injury = 113.9 months) |  |
| **Number of studies reporting validity data:** 2 |  |
|  |  |
| **Responsiveness** |  |
| **Floor/Ceiling Effect:**  
Not established in SCI | **Effect Size:**  
Not established in SCI | **Number of studies reporting responsiveness data:** 0 |