

DASS 21 – SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE NOTE: The DASS 21 should NOT be used to replace a face to face clinical interview. If you are experiencing significant emotional difficulties you should contact your GP for a referral to a qualified professional.

Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS21)

The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS21) is a set of three self-report scales designed to measure the negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress.

Each of the three DASS21 scales contains 7 items, divided into subscales with similar content. The Depression scale assesses dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, self-deprecation, lack of interest/involvement, anhedonia, and inertia. The Anxiety scale assesses autonomic arousal, skeletal muscle effects, situational anxiety, and subjective experience of anxious affect. The Stress scale is sensitive to levels of chronic non-specific arousal. It assesses difficulty relaxing, nervous arousal, and being easily upset/agitated, irritable/over-reactive and impatient. Scores for Depression, Anxiety and Stress are calculated by summing the scores for the relevant items.

The DASS21 is based on a dimensional rather than a categorical conception of psychological disorder. The assumption on which the DASS21 development was based (and which was confirmed by the research data) is that the differences between the depression, the anxiety, and the stress experienced by normal subjects and the clinically disturbed, are essentially differences of degree. The DASS21 therefore has no direct implications for the allocation of patients to discrete diagnostic categories postulated in classificatory systems such as the DSM and ICD. Recommended cut-off scores for conventional severity labels (normal, moderate, severe) are as follows:

NOTE: Scores obtained on the DASS 21 will need to be multiplied by 2 to calculate the final score.

	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extremely Severe	28+	20+	37+

Reference:

Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.F. (1995). Manual for the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales. (2nd. Ed.) Sydney: Psychology Foundation.