

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)

Category: Depression | Items: 20 | Time: ~5 min

Description / When to Use

20-item screening test for depressive symptoms in the general population.

Instructions for Respondent

Please read each statement carefully and respond based on how you have felt over the specified time period. There are 20 items in this scale. Estimated completion time: 5 minutes.

Scale Items

[Full item list not shown in this educational summary. Please refer to the original publication for complete items.]

Response Options

Please refer to the original publication for specific response options.

Scoring Guide

Sum all 20 items scored 0-3. Total range 0-60. Score ≥ 16 suggests clinically significant depression.

Cutoff Interpretation

Score Range	Severity	Recommended Action
0-15	Not depressed	None
16-21	Mild depression	Monitor
22-35	Major depression	Consider treatment
36-60	Severe depression	Immediate treatment

Psychometric Properties

Cronbach's alpha: 0.85 | Test-retest reliability: 0.70

Validity: Good sensitivity and specificity for major depression in community samples.

License

Free to use with citation

Citation (APA Format)

Radloff, L. S. (1977). The CES-D scale: A self-report depression scale for research in the general population. *Applied Psychological Measurement*, 1(3), 385-401.

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