

International Prostate Symptom Score (IPSS)

Category: Urology | Items: 7 | Time: ~2-3 min

Description / When to Use

Lower-urinary-tract symptoms in men

Instructions for Respondent

Please read each statement carefully and respond based on how you have felt over the specified time period. There are 7 items in this scale. Estimated completion time: 2-3 min.

Scale Items

1. Incomplete emptying

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

2. Frequency (< 2 h between voids)

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

3. Intermittency (stop / start)

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

4. Urgency (difficult to postpone)

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

5. Weak stream

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

6. Straining

0 = Not at all | 1 = < 1 in 5 | 2 = < half the time | 3 = ~ half | 4 = > half | 5 = Almost always

7. Nocturia (number of times)

0 = None | 1 = 1 | 2 = 2 | 3 = 3 | 4 = 4 | 5 = 5+

Scoring Guide

Sum all 7 items. Total range 0-35.

Cutoff Interpretation

Score Range	Severity	Recommended Action
0–7	Mildly symptomatic	Watchful waiting or lifestyle measures.
8–19	Moderately symptomatic	Medical therapy commonly indicated.
20–35	Severely symptomatic	Consider urological referral; surgery may be appropriate.

Psychometric Properties

See original validation study for reliability and validity data.

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Citation (APA Format)

Barry MJ et al. The American Urological Association symptom index for benign prostatic hyperplasia. *J Urol.* 1992;148(5):1549-1557.

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Disclaimer: An additional Quality of Life question (0–6) is recommended but is not summed into the IPSS total.