

Karnofsky Performance Status (Karnofsky PS)

Category: Oncology, Palliative | Items: 1 | Time: ~1-2 min

Description / When to Use

Functional status of cancer / chronic-illness patients

Instructions for Respondent

Please read each statement carefully and respond based on how you have felt over the specified time period. There are 1 items in this scale. Estimated completion time: 1-2 min.

Scale Items

1. Karnofsky score

Response Options

100 = 100 — Normal; no complaints; no evidence of disease. | 90 = 90 — Able to carry on normal activity; minor signs/symptoms. | 80 = 80 — Normal activity with effort; some signs/symptoms. | 70 = 70 — Cares for self; unable to carry on normal activity / active work. | 60 = 60 — Requires occasional assistance; cares for most personal needs. | 50 = 50 — Requires considerable assistance and frequent medical care. | 40 = 40 — Disabled; requires special care and assistance. | 30 = 30 — Severely disabled; hospitalisation indicated; death not imminent. | 20 = 20 — Very sick; hospitalisation necessary; supportive care required. | 10 = 10 — Moribund; rapidly progressing fatal processes. | 0 = 0 — Dead.

Scoring Guide

Sum all 1 items. Total range 0-100.

Cutoff Interpretation

Score Range	Severity	Recommended Action
0–40	Unable to care for self	KPS <= 40 — needs equivalent of institutional or hospital care
50–70	Unable to work; lives at home	KPS 50–70 — needs varying levels of assistance.
80–100	Able to carry on normal activity	KPS 80–100 — can usually tolerate active treatment.

Psychometric Properties

See original validation study for reliability and validity data.

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Citation (APA Format)

Karnofsky DA, Burchenal JH. The clinical evaluation of chemotherapeutic agents in cancer. In: MacLeod CM (ed). Evaluation of Chemotherapeutic Agents. New York: Columbia University Press; 1949: 191-205.