

Oswestry Disability Index v2.1a (ODI)

Category: Orthopaedics, Pain, MSK | Items: 10 | Time: ~2-3 min

Description / When to Use

Self-reported low-back-pain functional disability

Instructions for Respondent

Please read each statement carefully and respond based on how you have felt over the specified time period. There are 10 items in this scale. Estimated completion time: 2-3 min.

Scale Items

1. Pain intensity (0 = no pain -> 5 = unbearable)

0 = 0 — No pain | 1 = 1 — Very mild, comes and goes | 2 = 2 — Moderate, comes and goes | 3 = 3 — Moderate, does not vary | 4 = 4 — Severe, does not vary | 5 = 5 — Worst imaginable

2. Personal care (washing, dressing)

0 = 0 — Normal, no extra pain | 1 = 1 — Normal but painful | 2 = 2 — Painful, slow and careful | 3 = 3 — Need some help | 4 = 4 — Need help every day | 5 = 5 — Cannot dress / wash

3. Lifting

0 = 0 — Heavy weights without pain | 1 = 1 — Heavy weights with pain | 2 = 2 — Cannot lift heavy off floor | 3 = 3 — Only light-medium if positioned | 4 = 4 — Only very light | 5 = 5 — Cannot lift at all

4. Walking

0 = 0 — Pain-free any distance | 1 = 1 — > 1 mile causes pain | 2 = 2 — > ¼ mile causes pain | 3 = 3 — > 100 yds causes pain | 4 = 4 — Walks only with stick / crutches | 5 = 5 — Bed-bound

5. Sitting

0 = 0 — Any chair, any time | 1 = 1 — Favourite chair only | 2 = 2 — > 1 h | 3 = 3 — > 30 min | 4 = 4 — > 10 min | 5 = 5 — Cannot sit at all

6. Standing

0 = 0 — As long as I want | 1 = 1 — Long, but pain | 2 = 2 — > 1 h | 3 = 3 — > 30 min | 4 = 4 — > 10 min | 5 = 5 — Cannot stand at all

7. Sleeping

0 = 0 — Never disturbed | 1 = 1 — Occasionally disturbed | 2 = 2 — < 6 h | 3 = 3 — < 4 h | 4 = 4 — < 2 h | 5 = 5 — Pain prevents sleep

8. Social life

0 = 0 — Normal | 1 = 1 — Normal but more painful | 2 = 2 — No effect except energetic activities | 3 = 3 — Restricted, infrequent outings | 4 = 4 — Confined to home | 5 = 5 — No social life because of pain

9. Travelling

0 = 0 — Anywhere without pain | 1 = 1 — Anywhere but with extra pain | 2 = 2 — > 2 h | 3 = 3 — < 1 h | 4 = 4 — Short, necessary journeys < 30 min | 5 = 5 — Cannot travel except for treatment

10. Sex life (omit if not applicable)

0 = 0 — Normal, no extra pain | 1 = 1 — Normal but causes some pain | 2 = 2 — Nearly normal but very painful | 3 = 3 — Severely restricted | 4 = 4 — Nearly absent | 5 = 5 — Pain prevents any sex life

Scoring Guide

Sum all 10 items. Total range 0-50.

Cutoff Interpretation

Score Range	Severity	Recommended Action
0–10	Minimal disability (0–20%)	Cope with most activities; no treatment indicated apart from advice
11–20	Moderate disability (22–40%)	Pain, sitting, lifting, standing more painful; conservative management.
21–30	Severe disability (42–60%)	Pain remains main problem; investigations required.
31–40	Crippled (62–80%)	Pain impinges on all aspects of life; positive intervention required.
41–50	Bed-bound (82–100%)	Either bed-bound or exaggerating symptoms; observe carefully.

Psychometric Properties

See original validation study for reliability and validity data.

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Disclaimer: Multiply raw score by 2 to get the conventional ODI percentage. Both representations are interchangeable. If 'sex life' is omitted, divide by 45 instead of 50 and multiply by 100.