



Health Distress

These questions are about how you feel and how things have been with you during the past month. For each question, please circle the **one** number that comes closest to the way you have been feeling.

How much time during the **past month**...

	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	A good bit of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
1. Were you discouraged by your health problems?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Were you fearful about your future health?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Was your health a worry in your life?.....	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Were you frustrated by your health problems?	0	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

Score each item as the number circled. If two consecutive numbers are circled, score the higher (more distress) number. If the numbers are not consecutive, do not score the item. The scale score is the mean of the four items. If more than 1 item missing, set the value of the scale to missing. Scores range from 0-5; higher score indicating more distress about health.

Characteristics

Tested on 1,130 subjects with chronic disease. N=51 for test-retest.

No. of items	Observed Range	Mean	Standard Deviation	Internal Consistency Reliability	Test-Retest Reliability
4	0-5	2.04	1.16	.87	.87

Source of Psychometric Data

Chronic Disease Self-Management Study. Psychometrics reported in: Lorig K, Stewart A, Ritter P, González V, Laurent D, & Lynch J, *Outcome Measures for Health Education and other Health Care Interventions*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 1996, pp.25.

Comments

This is a modified version of the MOS health distress scale. We use 4 of the original 6 items, and changed the wording slightly. If possible items should be scrambled among other items using the same response categories, if possible (e.g., [Energy/Fatigue](#) scale). Because of the problems we have had using scales to measure negative emotion (e.g., depression) across cultures, we have substituted this scale. While it is not a depression or an anxiety scale, it does give us a good idea of distress caused by illness. It correlates .61 with the MOS depressive symptoms scale and .63 with the CES-D scale. Reprinted with permission, Duke University Press. This scale available in Spanish.

References

Lorig K, Stewart A, Ritter P, González V, Laurent D, & Lynch J, *Outcome Measures for Health Education and other Health Care Interventions*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 1996, pp.25,52-53.

Stewart AL, Hays RD, & Ware JE, Health Perceptions, energy/fatigue, and health distress measures, in Stewart AL & Ware JE, *Measuring Functioning and Well-Being: The Medical Outcomes Study Approach*. Durham NC: Duke University Press, pp. 143-172.

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