

Tip Sheet 6 – The Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)-15

What is the GDS: The Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) (15 point version) is a depression assessment tool specifically designed for older people. This short form of the GDS was developed in 1986 by Sheikh and Yesavage. There are four 'trigger' questions that often alert a practitioner to complete the 15-item GDS. They are:

1. Are you basically satisfied with your life? Yes/**NO**
2. Do you feel that your life is empty? **YES**/No
3. Are you afraid that something bad is going to happen to you? **YES**/No
4. Do you feel happy most of the time? Yes/**NO**

The 15 score item should be completed whenever possible.

Benefits of the GDS: The GDS can be filled out by the client or administered by an interviewer. It comprises of 15 questions about how the client has felt over the past week. Questions require yes/no answers.

While this tool is commonly used with people who have dementia, most studies investigating the GDS have excluded participants with dementia. Alternatively, the Cornell Scale for Depression (Alexopoulos, et al., 1988) has been recommended for use with people in residential care (Sanson et al, 2007), however training is required to use it.

Cut off: Higher scores indicate more depressive symptoms are present. A score of 6 or more suggests the presence of depression which indicates further medical/psychiatric assessment is required. A score of 11 or more usually always

indicates depression with higher scores indicating more severe depression.

Things to be aware of

It has been reported that a number of items in the GDS contain Western value judgments of optimism, happiness, stoicism and looking forward (Sanson et al, 2007). These include:

- Do you prefer to stay at home, rather than going out and doing new things?
- Do you think it is wonderful to be alive now?
- Do you worry a lot about the past?
- Do you think that most people are better off than you are?

These items may not be appropriate at all times for all cultural groups. Also, it is important to note that clients from some cultural groups may not disclose such information.



Translated Tools

Although there are a number of translated (written) versions of the GDS **many have not been verified or validated in Australia.**

You may choose to use the English version of this tool with an interpreter or ask an interpreter to follow a translated version of the tool. Translated tools referred to in the literature with evidence of psychometric properties include:



Italian: Pedrabissi & Santinello (1991) GDS-15 using a cut off score of ≥ 6 ; Segulin, & Deponte (2007 – see below) GDS-30 using the standard cut off score of 11.

Greek: GDS-15: Fountoulakis et al. (1999 – see below) using a cut off of 6/7.

Arabic: Chaaya et al. (2008) GDS-15 (cut off 7/8); Wrobel & Farrag, (2004; 2006 – see below) GDS-30 (cut off=11).



Further Resources and References

The following web page contains copies of the tool, information on scoring and unverified translations of the tool:

<http://www.stanford.edu/~yesavage/GDS.html>

The GDS can also be found on the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre website:

<http://www.dementia-assessment.com.au/measures.html>

References

- **Tool reference:** Sheikh, J.I., & Yesavage, J.A. (1986). Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS): Recent evidence and development of a shorter version. *Clinical Gerontologist*, 5, 165-173.
- Alexopoulos, G.S., Abrams, R.C., Young, R.C., et al. (1988) Cornell scale for depression in dementia. *Biological Psychiatry*. 23(3), 271-284.
- Chaaya, M., Sibai, A-M., El Roueiheb, Z., Chemaitelly, H., Chahine, L.M., Al-Amin, H., & Mahfoud, A. (2008). Validation of the Arabic version of the short Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15). *International Psychogeriatrics*, 20(3), 571-581.
- Fountoulakis, K., Tsolaki, M., Iacovdies, A., Yesavage, J., O'Hara, R., Kazis, A., & Ierodiakonou, C. (1999). The validation of the short form of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) in Greece. *Aging: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 11, 367-372. Tool available here: <http://www.stanford.edu/~yesavage/GDS-Greek.html>
- Pedrabissi, L. & Santinello, M. (1991). Contributo all'adattamento italiano e taratura della Geriatric Depression Scale. *B. Psicol. Appl*, 198, 3-7 (in Italian).
- Segulin, N. & Deponte, A. (2007). The evaluation of depression in the elderly: A modification of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS). *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 44(2), 105-12.
- Sansoni, J., Marosszeky, N., Jeon, Y.-H., Chenoweth, L., Hawthorne, G., King M, Budge M, Zapart S, Sansoni E, Senior K, Kenny, P., Low, L. (2007). *Final Report: Dementia Outcomes Measurement Suite Project*. Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong.
- Wrobel, N.H. & Farrag, M.F. (2004). *Identification of dementia and mental health symptoms in an elderly Arab American sample: Final report*. Wayne County Senior Citizens Services, Detroit. (Tool attached as an appendix).
- Wrobel, N.H., & Farrag, M.F. (2006). A Preliminary Report on the Validation of the Geriatric Depression Scale in Arabic. *Clinical Gerontologist*, 29(4), 33-46.

GDS in Arabic

Wrobel, N.H. & Farrag, M.F. (2004). *Identification of dementia and mental health symptoms in an elderly Arab American sample: Final report*. Wayne County Senior Citizens Services, Detroit.

GDS

من فضلك ضع دائرة حول أفضل إجابة تصب كيف تشعر خلال الأسبوع الماضي.

- 1) هل أنت راض عن حياتك أساساً؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 2) هل تخليت عن كثير من أنشطتك واهتماماتك؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 3) هل تشعر بأن حياتك اليومية فارغة؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 4) هل كثيراً ما تشعر بالملل؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 5) هل تشعر بالأمل نحو المستقبل؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 6) هل يضايقك التفكير في أشياء لا تستطيع التخلص منها؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 7) هل أنت في روح معنوية طيبة هذه الأيام؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 8) هل أنت خائف من أن شيئاً سيئاً سوف يحدث لك؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 9) هل تشعر بالسعادة معظم الوقت؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 10) هل تشعر بالعجز معظم الوقت؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 11) هل كثيراً ما تشعر بأنك متململ و غير مرتاح؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 12) هل تفضل البقاء في البيت على الخروج وعمل أشياء جديدة؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 13) هل كثيراً ما تقلق حول المستقبل؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 14) هل تشعر بأن لديك مشكلات في الذاكرة أكثر من معظم الناس؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 15) هل تعتقد أن شيء رائع أن تكون حياً الآن؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 16) هل كثيراً ما تشعر بالانقباض والحزن؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 17) هل كثيراً ما تشعر بأنه لا قيمة لك حالياً؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 18) هل تقلق كثيراً حول الماضي؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 19) هل تجد الحياة مثيرة جداً؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 20) هل من الصعب عليك أن تبدأ مشروعات جديدة؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 21) هل تشعر بأنك ملئ بالطاقة؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 22) هل تشعر بأن موقفك يدعو لليأس؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 23) هل تشعر بأن معظم الناس أحسن حالا منك؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 24) هل كثيراً ما تنزعج على أشياء صغيرة؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 25) هل كثيراً ما تشعر بأنك على وشك البكاء؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 26) هل لديك صعوبة في التركيز؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 27) هل تستمتع بالاستيقاظ في الصباح؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 28) هل تفضل تجنب اللقاءات الاجتماعية؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 29) هل من السهل عليك اتخاذ القرارات؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم
- 30) هل عقلك بنفس الوضوح الذي تعودت عليه؟ ☐ لا ☐ نعم

GDS in Italian

Segulin, N. & Deponte, A. (2007). The evaluation of depression in the elderly: A modification of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS). *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 44(2), 105-12.

Geriatric Depression Scale – M

(Segulin e Deponte, Arch. Geront.Geriat., 2007)

Età	Scolarità	Sesso	Data
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Scegliere la risposta in base a come vi siete sentiti nel corso dell'ultima settimana.

1.	E' sostanzialmente soddisfatto della vita che conduce?	Si	No
2.	Ha abbandonato molte delle cose che faceva?	Si	No
3.	La giornata le sembra vuota?	Si	No
4.	E' spesso annoiato?	Si	No
5.	E' ottimista verso il futuro?	Si	No
6.	E' infastidito da pensieri che non riesce a togliersi dalla testa?	Si	No
7.	E' di buon umore per la maggior parte del tempo?	Si	No
8.	Ha paura che qualcosa di brutto stia per accaderle?	Si	No
9.	Si sente sereno per la maggior parte del tempo?	Si	No
10.	Si sente spesso indifeso?	Si	No
11.	Si sente spesso irrequieto e agitato?	Si	No
12.	Preferisce rimanere in casa piuttosto che uscire?	Si	No
13.	La sua salute la preoccupa più del solito?	Si	No
14.	Le sembra di avere più problemi di memoria rispetto agli altri?	Si	No
15.	Pensa sia bello essere vivi adesso?	Si	No
16.	Si sente spesso giù di corda e malinconico?	Si	No
17.	Si sente inutile nella sua situazione?	Si	No
18.	Si tormenta molto pensando al passato?	Si	No
19.	Dorme bene?	Si	No
20.	Le riesce difficile affrontare gli impegni della vita quotidiana?	Si	No
21.	Quando si alza la mattina, sente di avere energie sufficienti?	Si	No
22.	Le sembra che la sua situazione sia senza speranza?	Si	No
23.	Pensa che la maggior parte delle persone stia meglio di lei?	Si	No
24.	E' spesso agitato per cose poco importanti?	Si	No
25.	Ha frequentemente voglia di piangere?	Si	No
26.	Ha difficoltà a prestare attenzione alle cose che deve fare?	Si	No
27.	Ha un buon appetito?	Si	No
28.	Preferisce evitare di incontrare gente?	Si	No
29.	Le riesce facile prendere delle decisioni?	Si	No
30.	Le sembra che la sua mente sia lucida come prima?	Si	No

Punteggio Totale _____/30

GDS in Greek

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Web address for tool: <http://www.stanford.edu/~yesavage/GDS-Greek.html>

1	Are you basically satisfied with your life?		
	Είστε βασικά ευχαριστημένοι με τη ζωή σας;	ναι όχι	0 1
2	Have you dropped many of your activities and interests?		
	Εγκαταλείψατε πολλές από τις δραστηριότητες και τα ενδιαφέροντά σας;	ναι όχι	1 0
3	Do you feel that your life is empty?		
	Αισθάνεστε ότι η ζωή σας είναι άδεια;	ναι όχι	1 0
4	Do you often get bored?		
	Βαριέστε συχνά;	ναι όχι	1 0
5	Are you in good spirits most of the time?		
	Είστε στα κέφια σας τον περισσότερο καιρό;	ναι όχι	0 1
6	Are you afraid that something bad is going to happen to you?		
	Φοβάστε ότι θα σας συμβεί κάτι κακό;	ναι όχι	1 0
7	Do you feel happy most of the time?		
	Αισθάνεστε ευτυχισμένος τον περισσότερο καιρό;	ναι όχι	0 1
8	Do you often feel helpless?		
	Αισθάνεστε συχνά αβοήθητος;	ναι όχι	1 0
9	Do you prefer to stay at home rather than go out and do new things?		
	Προτιμάτε να μένετε στο σπίτι παρά να βγαίνετε έξω και να κάνετε διάφορα καινούρια πράγματα;	ναι όχι	1 0
10	Do you feel you have more problems with your memory than most?		
	Αισθάνεστε ότι έχετε περισσότερα προβλήματα με τη μνήμη σας απ' ότι οι άλλοι;	ναι όχι	1 0
11	Do you think it is wonderful to be alive now?		

	Πιστεύετε ότι είναι υπέροχο πράγμα που είστε ζωντανός τώρα;	ναι όχι	0 1
12	Do you feel pretty worthless the way you are now?		
	Αισθάνεστε άχρηστος έτσι όπως είστε τώρα;	ναι όχι	1 0
13	Do you feel full of energy?		
	Αισθάνεστε γεμάτος ενέργεια;	ναι όχι	0 1
14	Do you feel that your situation is hopeless?		
	Αισθάνεστε ότι η κατάστασή σας είναι απελπιστική;	ναι όχι	1 0
15	Do you think that most people are better than you are?		
	Πιστεύετε ότι οι περισσότεροι άνθρωποι είναι σε καλύτερη κατάσταση από εσάς;	ναι όχι	1 0