



## SCORING THE DASH

In the spring of 2002, we introduced a revised scoring method for the DASH Outcome Measure. This new method is **algebraically equivalent** to the original but it is simpler, more efficient and less complicated to use when dealing with missing data. For these reasons, we recommend adopting this revised method; however, it does not matter which method you use as you will end up with the same score.

The DASH is scored in two components: the disability/symptom questions (30 items, scored 1-5) and the optional high performance sport/music or work section (4 items, scored 1-5).

### Disability/symptom score

At least 27 of the 30 items must be completed for a score to be calculated. The assigned values for all completed responses are simply summed and averaged, producing a score out of five. This value is then transformed to a score out of 100 by subtracting one and multiplying by 25. This transformation is done to make the score easier to compare to other measures scaled on a 0-100 scale. A higher score indicates greater disability.

DASH disability/symptom score =

$$\frac{[(\text{sum of } n \text{ responses}) - 1] \times 25}{n}$$

where n is equal to the number of completed responses.

### Optional modules (sport/music or work)

Each optional module consists of four items, which may or may not be used by individuals because of the nature of the questions. The goal of the optional modules is to identify the specific difficulties that professional athletes/performing artists or other groups of workers might experience but which may not affect their activities of daily living and consequently may go “undetected” in the 30-item portion of the DASH.

The same procedure described above is followed to calculate the optional four-item module score. All four questions must be answered in order to calculate the score. Simply add up the assigned values for each response and divide by four (number of items); subtract one and multiply by 25 to get a score out of 100.

### Missing Items

If more than 10 percent of the items (that is, more than three items) are left blank by the respondent, you will not be able to calculate a DASH disability/symptom score. By this same rule (that is, no more than 10 percent of the items can be left blank), no missing values can be tolerated in the high-performance sports/ performing arts or work module because the module consists of only four items. This missing data “rule” applies to both the original and revised scoring methods.



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