

Perceived Stress Scale

For each question choose from the following alternatives:

0 - never 1 - almost never 2 - sometimes 3 - fairly often 4 - very often

- _____ 1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?
- _____ 2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
- _____ 3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?
- _____ 4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
- _____ 5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
- _____ 6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?
- _____ 7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?
- _____ 8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
- _____ 9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?
- _____ 10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

Figuring Your PSS Score

You can determine your PSS score by following these directions:

- First, reverse your scores for questions 4, 5, 7, and 8. On these 4 questions, change the scores like this:

$$0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1, 4 = 0.$$

- Now add up your scores for each item to get a total. My total score is _____.
- Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.
 - ▶ Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress.
 - ▶ Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress.
 - ▶ Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

The Perceived Stress Scale is interesting and important because your perception of what is happening in your life is most important. Consider the idea that two individuals could have the exact same events and experiences in their lives for the past month. Depending on their perception, the total score could put one of those individuals in the low stress category and the total score could put the second person in the high stress category.

Disclaimer: The following information is not intended to provide a medical diagnosis or course of treatment and cannot take the place of seeing a mental health professional. If you think you are experiencing high stress and feel unable to cope, talk with your doctor or mental health professional immediately. This is especially important if your symptoms are getting worse or affecting your daily activities.