

The Disabilities of the Arm Shoulder and Hand (DASH) Symptom Scale

Overview: The Disabilities of the Arm Shoulder and Hand (DASH) symptom scale can be used to evaluate a patient with a disorder of the upper extremity. It can be used to monitor the patient over time and to determine the effectiveness of an intervention.

Measures:

- (1) opening a tight or new jar
- (2) writing
- (3) turning a key
- (4) preparing a meal
- (5) pushing open a heavy door
- (6) placing an object on a shelf above the head
- (7) doing heavy household chores
- (8) gardening or doing yard work
- (9) making a bed
- (10) carrying a shopping bag or briefcase
- (11) carrying a heavy object (over 5 kilograms)
- (12) changing a light bulb overhead
- (13) washing or blowing drying the hair
- (14) washing the back
- (15) putting on a pullover sweater
- (16) using a knife to cut food
- (17) recreational activities that require little effort
- (18) recreational activities that require taking some force or impact through the arm shoulder or hand
- (19) recreational activities that require moving the arm freely
- (20) managing transportation needs (getting from one place to another)
- (21) sexual activities
- (22) social activities
- (23) work and other daily activities

(24) pain

(25) pain when performing activities

(26) tingling

(27) weakness

(28) stiffness

(29) difficulty in sleeping

(30) impact on self-image

Response	Points
no difficulty or no symptom	0
slight difficulty or mild symptom	1
moderate difficulty or symptom	2
severe difficulty or symptom	3
unable to perform or very severe symptom	4

where:

- Pain (item 24) may refer to pain at rest.
- Alternatively the points may be assigned from 1 to 5.

total score = SUM(points for all 30 items)

adjusted score (if scored from 0 to 4) = (total score for patient) / 120 * 100

Interpretation:

- minimum score (using 0 to 4 scale): 0
- maximum score (using 0 to 4 scale): 120
- minimum adjusted score: 0
- maximum adjusted score: 100

Adjusted Score	Disability Level
0	no disability
100	extreme disability

References:

Atroshi I Gummesson C et al. The disabilities of the arm shoulder and hand (DASH) outcome questionnaire. Reliability and validity of the Swedish version evaluated in 176 patients. *Acta Orthop Scand.* 2000; 71: 613-618 (Table 1 page 614).

Hudak PL Amadio PC Bombardier C. Development of an upper extremity outcome measure: the DASH (disabilities of the arm shoulder and hand). *Am J Indust Med.* 1996; 29: 602-608