

The Groningen Activity Restriction Scale (GARS)

Overview: The Groningen Activity Restriction Scale (GARS) is general disease independent instrument for measuring disability. It can be used to monitor a patient over time and to identify potential interventions. The authors are from the University of Groningen in The Netherlands.

Statements about Activities of Daily Living (ADL) - Can you fully independently:

- (1) dress yourself?
- (2) get in and out of bed?
- (3) stand up from sitting in a chair?
- (4) wash your face and hands?
- (5) wash and dry your whole body?
- (6) get on and off the toilet?
- (7) feed yourself?
- (8) get around in the house (if necessary with a cane)?
- (9) go up and down the stairs?
- (10) walk outdoors (if necessary with a cane)?
- (11) take care of your feet and toenails?

Statements about Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) - Can you fully independently:

- (12) prepare breakfast or lunch?
- (13) prepare dinner?
- (14) do "light" household activities (for example dusting and tidying up)?
- (15) do "heavy" household activities (for example mopping cleaning the windows and vacuuming)?
- (16) wash and iron your clothes?
- (17) make the beds?
- (18) do the shopping?

Response (based on what the patient is able to do)	Points
Yes I can do it fully independently without any difficulty	1
Yes I can do it fully independently but with some difficulty	2
Yes I can do it fully independently but with great difficulty	3

No I cannot do it fully independently. I can only do it with someone's help.	4
No I cannot do it at all. I need complete help.	4

where:

- The point assignment for needing complete help was originally 5 points but was switched to 4 because only a few patients selected this response. There may be an argument to keep it at 5 points.
- The response is based on what the patient is able to do rather than what s/he usually does.

total score = SUM(points for all 18 items)

Interpretation:

- minimum score: 18
- maximum score: 72
- The higher the score the greater the disability.

References:

Suurmeijer TBPM Doeglas DM et al. The Groningen Activity Restriction Scale for measuring disability: Its utility in international comparisons. Am J Public Health. 1994; 84: 1270-1273 (Table 1 page 1271).