



The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)

The K10 is a simple measure of psychological distress and also a measure of outcomes following treatment for common mental health disorder. The K10 uses a five value response option for each question – all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time and none of the time which can be scored from five through to one.

The numbers attached to the 10 responses are added up and the total is the score on the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10).

The maximum score is 50, indicating severe distress and the minimum score is 10, indicating no distress.

Questions 3 and 6 are not asked if the answer to the preceding question was 'none of the time', in which case questions 3 and 6 automatically receive a score of one.

People seen in primary care who score:

- under 20 are likely to be well
- 20–24 are likely to have a mild mental health disorder
- 25–29 are likely to have moderate mental health disorder
- 30 and over are likely to have a severe mental health disorder.

Thirteen per cent of the adult population will score 20 and over and about 1 in 4 patients seen in primary care will score 20 and over. This is a screening instrument and practitioners should make a clinical judgement as to whether a person needs treatment.[1]



K10 Questionnaire

Patient Name: _____

Date: _____

For all questions, please circle the number that corresponds with appropriate response.

In the past 4 weeks:	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
1. About how often did you feel tired out for no good reason?	1	2	3	4	5
2. About how often did you feel nervous?	1	2	3	4	5
3. About how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?	1	2	3	4	5
4. About how often did you feel hopeless?	1	2	3	4	5
5. About how often did you feel restless or fidgety?	1	2	3	4	5
6. About how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?	1	2	3	4	5
7. About how often did you feel depressed?	1	2	3	4	5
8. About how often did you feel that everything is an effort?	1	2	3	4	5
9. About how often did you feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up?	1	2	3	4	5
10. About how often did you feel worthless?	1	2	3	4	5

Total score: _____

1. Kessler RC, Andrews G, Colpe LJ, Hiripi E, Mroczek D, Normand S, et al. [Short screening scales to monitor population prevalences and trends in non-specific psychological distress.](#) Psychol Med 2002;32:959-76.