

FIST Scoring Instructions

The FIST uses a consistent scoring scale for each test item. The FIST was designed this way to make it easier for the examiner to score items and to reduce the need to refer to the scoring scale while administering the test once familiar with the test items.

4 Independent

Completes the task independently and successfully

Comments: This would be the reaction, speed, and safety you would expect in someone without any sitting balance problems.

3 Verbal cues or increased time

Completes the task independently and successfully but may need verbal cues or excessive time

Comments: The performance of the activity is normal, but the patient needs more than necessary time or more cues than normally expected to complete the activity.

2 Upper extremity support

Unable to complete the task without using upper extremities for support or assistance

Comments: The patient must use their hands to successfully complete the task or for maintenance of balance during the task. It does not matter if the patient uses one or both upper extremities; any use as a requirement results in a score of 2

1 Needs assistance

Unable to complete task successfully without physical assistance (document level of physical assist required: min, mod, or max assist)

Comments: If the therapist doesn't provide physical assistance, the patient cannot complete the task or may lose balance or fall. Document the amount physical assistance required for safe performance of the task to track patient progress: min = 25% or less, mod = 26-74%, max = 75% or more.

0 Dependent

Requires complete physical assistance to perform task successfully, is unable to complete task successfully even with physical assistance, or dependent

Comments: Without the therapist's assistance, the patient could not complete any of the task successfully or safely.

Individual FIST Item Instructions

Remember, the patient should be repositioned as needed throughout the test so they are in the standard patient position before attempting each test item.

1. Anterior nudge

(light pressure x 1 time, at sternum)

Without warning, push participant with light pressure, once.

2. Posterior nudge

(light pressure x 1 time, between scapular spines)

Without warning, push participant with light pressure, once.

3. Lateral nudge

(light pressure 1 time to dominant/stronger side, at acromion)

Without warning, push participant with light pressure, once only, at dominant/stronger side's acromion.

4. Static sitting

"Sit with your hands in your lap."

Examiner times for 30 seconds.

5. Sitting, move head side to side (nod 'no')

"Remain sitting steady and tall without using your hands unless you need them to help you balance. When I tell you to 'look right,' keep sitting straight, but turn your head to the right. Keep looking to the right until I tell you 'look left,' then keep sitting straight and turn your head to the left. Keep your head to the left until I tell you, 'look straight,' then keep sitting straight but return your head to the center."

Patient needs to move head through full available ROM. Examiner scores entire sequence.

6. Sitting, eyes closed

“Close your eyes and remain sitting still with your hands in your lap.”

Examiner times for 30 seconds.

7. Sitting, lift feet

(dominant side, stronger side, least involved side only; do two repetitions)

“Sit with your hands in your lap; lift your [uninvolved side] foot 1 inch off the floor, like this. [Demonstrate] Now do it one more time.”

Repeat so the subject lifts uninvolved, stronger, or dominant side twice.

8. Turn and pick up object from behind in preferred direction

“Turn around and pick up the object that I’ve placed behind you.”

Patient may turn to their preferred direction and use their stronger/dominant/least involved hand. Examiner places object in midline, one hand’s breadth [fingertip to base of palm] posterior to hips.

9. Reach forward with uninvolved hand outstretched at shoulder height

“Reach with your stronger/least involved/less painful arm as far as you can while staying balanced, like this. [Demonstrate] Keep your other hand remaining in your lap.”

Examiner first performs movement passively to assess ROM. Patient must move through full available ROM or until abdomen contacts anterior thighs for highest score. Use available pain free ROM. If patient has pain, and make notation in Notes/Comments box.

10. Lateral reach with hand at shoulder height

(lifts and moves towards the dominant or stronger side)

“Reach out to the side as far as you can. Be sure to get all your weight off the opposite side of your bottom keeping your feet on the floor, like this.

[Demonstrate] ”

Patient must complete full, available ROM maintaining upright upper trunk and upper extremity position, with contralateral trunk shortening and clearance of contralateral ischial tuberosity and return to midline for full score. Should move to preferred side, stronger side, or least affected side.

11. Pick object up off floor

“Pick this object up off the floor.”

Examiner places object between patient’s feet at level of 1st MTP joint.

Patient can use whatever hand they prefer to pick up the object.

12. Posterior scooting (2”)

“Now, move backward 2 inches. Try not to use your hands, if you can.”

Patient needs to move full 2 inches. Use tape measure to verify 2 inches.

13. Anterior scooting (2”)

“Move forward 2 inches towards the edge of the bed without using your hands, if possible.”

Use tape measure to verify 2 inches. Patient needs to move full 2 inches.

14. Lateral scooting (2”)

(scored once to preferred direction)

“Move sideways 2 inches without your hands, and remember to try not to use your hands.”

Patient needs to move the full 2 inches; use the tape measure to verify.

FUNCTION IN SITTING TEST (FIST) RESULTS

FIST Test Item		Date:	Date:	Date:
½ femur on surface; hips & knees flexed to 90° <input type="checkbox"/> Used step/stool for positioning & foot support				
Randomly Administered Once	Anterior Nudge: superior sternum			
	Posterior Nudge: between scapular spines			
	Lateral Nudge: to dominant side at acromion			
Static sitting: 30 seconds				
Sitting, shake 'no': left and right				
Sitting, eyes closed: 30 seconds				
Sitting, lift foot: dominant side, lift foot 1 inch twice				
Pick up object from behind: object at midline, hands breadth posterior				
Forward reach: use dominant arm, must complete full motion				
Lateral reach: use dominant arm, clear opposite ischial tuberosity				
Pick up object from floor: from between feet				
Posterior scooting: move backwards 2 inches				
Anterior scooting: move forward 2 inches				
Lateral scooting: move to dominant side 2 inches				
TOTAL		/ 56	/ 56	/ 56
Administered by:				
Notes/comments:				
Scoring Key: 4 = Independent (completes task independently & successfully) 3 = Verbal cues/increased time (completes task independently & successfully and only needs more time/cues) 2 = Upper extremity support (must use UE for support or assistance to complete successfully) 1 = Needs assistance (unable to complete w/o physical assist; document level: min, mod, max) 0 = Dependent (requires complete physical assist; unable to complete successfully even w/physical assist)				