

# Innovative Therapy Services, LLC

## Berg Balance Scale

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We are going to take a look at your balance and strength in a few different positions and movements. Some may be very easy and some may be difficult. Just do the best you can. This helps us identify areas that we can work on to help improve mobility. Then in a month or so we can do it again to see if things have gotten better.

**\* 1. Sitting to Standing (18" chair +/-1" and note ht.)**

Instructions: Please stand up, try not to use your hands for support

- 4  A. Able to stand without using hands & stabilizes independently.
- 3  B. Able to stand independently using hands.
- 2  C. Able to stand using hands after several tries.
- 1  D. Needs minimal aid to stand or stabilize.
- 0  E. Needs moderate or maximal assist to stand.

**2. Standing Unsupported**

Instructions: Please stand 2 minutes without holding

- 4  A. Able to stand safely for 2 minutes.
- 3  B. Able to stand for 2 minutes with supervision.
- 2  C. Able to stand for 30 seconds unsupported.
- 1  D. Needs several tries to stand unsupported for 30 seconds.
- 0  E. Unable to stand for 30 seconds without support.

**3. Sitting With Back Unsupported But Feet Supported On Floor Or On A Stool.**

Instructions: Please sit with arms folded for 2 minutes.

- 4  A. Able to sit safely and securely for 2 minutes.
- 3  B. Able to sit 2 minutes with supervision.
- 2  C. Able to sit for 30 seconds.
- 1  D. Able to sit for 10 seconds.
- 0  E. Unable to sit without support for 10 seconds.

**4. Standing To Sit**

Instructions: Please sit down.

- 4  A. Sits safely with minimal use of hands.
- 3  B. Controls descent by using hands.
- 2  C. Uses back of legs against chair to control descent.
- 1  D. Sits independently, but has uncontrolled descent.
- 0  E. Needs assistance to sit.

**5. Transfers**

Instructions: Arrange chairs for a pivot transfer. Ask the patient to transfer one way toward a seat without armrests and one way toward a seat with arms. You may use two chairs or a bed/mat and a chair.

- 4  A. Able to transfer safely with minor use of hands.
- 3  B. Able to transfer safely with definite need of hands.
- 2  C. Able to transfer with verbal cuing &/or supervision.
- 1  D. Needs one person to assist.
- 0  E. Needs two people to assist or supervise to be safe.

**\* 6. Standing Unsupported (Eyes Closed)**

Instructions: Please close your eyes & stand still for 10 seconds.

- 4  A. Able to stand for 10 seconds.
- 3  B. Able to stand for 10 seconds with supervision.
- 2  C. Able to stand for 3 seconds.
- 1  D. Unable to keep eyes closed for 3 seconds but stands safely.
- 0  E. Needs help to keep from falling.

**7. Standing Unsupported (Feet Together)**

Instructions: Place your feet together & stand without holding.

- 4  A. Able to place feet together independently & stand safely for 1 min.
- 3  B. Able to place feet together independently & stand with supervision for 1 min.
- 2  C. Able to place feet together independently but unable to hold for 30 seconds.
- 1  D. Needs help to assume the position but can stand for 15 seconds.
- 0  E. Needs help to assume position & unable to stand for 15 seconds.

**\* 8. Reaching Forward (Outstretched Arm) Standing**

Instructions: Lift arm to 90 degrees. Stretch out your fingers & reach forward as far as you can. (Place ruler at the tips of fingers-patient should not touch ruler when reaching). Distance recorded is from the fingertips with the patient in the most forward position. Patient uses both hands & avoids trunk flexion. **use both arms when possible to prevent rotation**

- 4  A. Can reach forward confidently 10 inches or 20-30 cm.
- 3  B. Can reach forward safely 5 inches or 12 cm.
- 2  C. Can reach safely 2 inches or 5 cm.
- 1  D. Reaches forward but needs supervision.
- 0  E. Loses balance when trying, requires external support.

**\* 9. Picking up Object From The Floor(Standing)**

Instructions: Pick up the shoe slipper in front of your feet.

- 4  A. Able to pick up slipper safely & easily.
- 3  B. Able to pick up slipper, but needs supervision.
- 2  C. Unable to pick up slipper, but reaches 1-2 inches from the slipper & keeps balance independently.
- 1  D. Unable to pick up slipper & needs supervision while trying.
- 0  E. Unable to try/needs assistance to keep from losing balance/Falling.

**12. Place Alternate Foot On Step/Stool (Standing) (7-8" ht)**

Instructions: Place each foot alternately on the step stool. Continue until each foot has touched the step stool 4 times.

- 4  A. Able to complete 8 steps in 20 seconds safely & independently.
- 3  B. Able to complete 8 steps > 20 seconds independently.
- 2  C. Able to complete 4 steps without aid, with supervision.
- 1  D. Able to complete > 2 steps; needs minimal assistance.
- 0  E. Needs assistance to keep from falling/unable to try.

**\* 10. Look Behind Right & Left Shoulder (Standing)**

Instructions: Turn and look behind you over the left shoulder. Repeat to the right. Examiner may pick an object to look at behind the patient.

- 4  A. Looks behind from both sides and weight shifts well.
- 3  B. Looks behind one side only, other side shows less weight shift.
- 2  C. Turns sideways only, but maintains balance.
- 1  D. Needs close supervision or verbal cueing.
- 0  E. Needs assistance while turning.

**\*13. Standing One Foot In Front(Unsupported)**

Instructions: (Demonstrate) Place one foot directly in front of the other. If you feel that you cannot place your foot in front, try & step far enough ahead that the heel of your forward foot is ahead of the toes of your other foot.

- 4  A. Able to place foot tandem independently & hold for 30 seconds.
- 3  B. Able to place foot ahead of other independently for 30 seconds.
- 2  C. Able to take a small step independently & hold for 30 seconds.
- 1  D. Needs help to step but can hold for 15 seconds.
- 0  E. Loses balance while stepping or standing.

**11. Turns 360 Degrees**

Instructions: Turn completely around in a full circle, pause, then turn a full circle in the other direction.

- 4  A. Able to turn 360 degrees safely in 4 seconds or less.
- 3  B. Able to turn 360 safely, one side only, 4 seconds or less.
- 2  C. Able to turn 360 safely, but slowly.
- 1  D. Needs close supervision or verbal cueing.
- 0  E. Needs assistance while turning.

**\*14. Standing On One Leg**

Instructions: Stand on one leg without holding as long as you can

- 4  A. Able to lift leg independently & hold > 10 seconds.
- 3  B. Able to lift leg independently & hold 5-10 seconds.
- 2  C. Able to lift leg independently and hold equal or > 2 seconds.
- 1  D. Tries to lift leg, unable to hold for 3 seconds, but remains standing.
- 0  E. Unable to try or needs assistance to prevent fall.

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED:**

Form

A ruler or ability to identify 2,5, 10 inches

2 standard chairs

one with armrests, one without "of a reasonable height" --18"

A footstool or step--"average step height" (7-8")

Stopwatch

**SCORE INTERPRETATION**

Cut-off scores for the elderly reported by Berg (1992) :

A score of 56 indicates functional balance.

A score of < 45 indicates individuals may be at greater risk of falling.

More recently reported for elderly population to be 95% confident that true change (MDC) has occurred if a patient scores within:

45-56: a change of 4 points

35-44: a change of 5 points

25-34: a change of 7 points

0-24: a change of 5 points

Institutionalized Older Adults: (Conradsson et al, 2007; Institutionalized Older Adults)

— Mean score = 30.1 (15.9) points