

# Perceived Stress Scale

You can use the Perceived Stress Scale as a way of estimating personal stress levels to give you an idea of your current level of wellbeing.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was originally developed in 1983, but is useful for helping us to understand how different situations affect our feelings and our perceived stress. The questions in this scale ask about your feelings and thoughts during the last month.

**For each question on the following page, choose from the following options:**

0 - never

1 - almost never

2 - sometimes

3 - fairly often

4 - very often

## Score criteria

0 - never, 1 - almost never, 2 - sometimes, 3 - fairly often, 4 - very often

In the last month, how often have you...	Score
1. Been upset due to something happening unexpectedly	
2. Felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	
3. Felt nervous and stressed?	
4. Felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	
5. Felt that things were going your way?	
6. Felt you couldn't cope with all the things you had to do?	
7. Been able to control irritations in your life?	
8. Felt that you were on top of things?	
9. Been angered because of things that happened outside of your control?	
10. Felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	

### Calculating your PSS score:

You can determine your PSS score by following these directions:

- First, reverse your scores for questions 4, 5, 7, and 8.
- On these 4 questions, change the scores like this:
- 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1, 4 = 0.
- Now add up your scores for each item to get a total.

**Total:**

# What do my results mean?

Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived personal stress levels.

- Scores ranging from 0-13 indicate low personal stress.
- Scores ranging from 14-26 indicate moderate personal stress.
- Scores ranging from 27-40 indicate high personal stress.

The Perceived Stress Scale is interesting and important because it's your perception of what is happening in your life. Consider the idea that two individuals could have the exact same events and experiences in their lives for the past month. Depending on their perception, total score could put one of those individuals in the low stress category and while the total score for the second person could put them in the high stress category.

You can use the PSS to assess how well you think you are coping with the demands of your day-to-day life.

**Disclaimer: The scores on the following self-assessment do not reflect any particular diagnosis or course of treatment. They are meant as a tool to help assess your level of stress. If you have any further concerns about your current well-being, contact your GP or another mental health professional immediately. In emergencies, you should dial 999.**