

# *Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS)*

## **What is the HADS?**

The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) is a 14-item tool used to screen for anxiety and depression, which commonly coexist. The HADS produces a subscale for anxiety (HADS-A) and a separate subscale for depression (HADS-D). The HADS can be administered in 5 minutes.

## **Population the Test Serves**

The HADS is intended for use with adults in the hospital setting who are thought to have anxiety and or depression. Some work has also validated it in the general population.<sup>1,2</sup>

## **Importance of the HADS**

Anxiety often precedes depression. The HADS allows health practitioners to advise on early interventions which would be missed with a depression only screen (e.g., PHQ-9). HADS does not include all of the diagnostic criteria of depression.<sup>3</sup> For this, additional questions on appetite, sleep and self-harm/suicidal thoughts must be asked.

## **Psychometric Properties**

It is important to note that five of the 14 items are reverse coded meaning agreeing with the statement usually is a sign of anxiety/depression while five statements that a person may agree with are associated with minimal anxiety/depression.

## **Cut-Off Scores**

Traditional Subscale Cut-off Scores (Score separately for anxiety and depression subscale)

**0-7** = Normal

**8-10** = Borderline abnormal

**11-21** = Abnormal

A total score is calculated by adding together all the values, with a total score  $\geq 12$  suggesting depression, whereas sub-scores of  $\geq 8$  suggest anxiety or depression.<sup>4</sup> Some evidence does suggest lower total scores of  $\geq 9$  (sensitivity 85%, specificity 81%) and a HADS-D cut-off at  $\geq 4$  (sensitivity 85%, specificity 79%).<sup>5</sup>

## Resources

1. Spinhoven P, Ormel J, Sloekers PP, Kempen GI, Speckens AE, Van Hemert AM. A validation study of the hospital anxiety and depression scale (HADS) in different groups of dutch subjects. *Psychol Med*. 1997;27(2):363-370. doi: 10.1017/s0033291796004382.
2. Mykletun A, Stordal E, Dahl AA. Hospital anxiety and depression (HAD) scale: Factor structure, item analyses and internal consistency in a large population. *Br J Psychiatry*. 2001;179:540-544. doi: 10.1192/bjp.179.6.540.
3. Stern AF. The hospital anxiety and depression scale. *Occup Med (Lond)*. 2014;64(5):393-394. doi: 10.1093/occmed/kqu024.
4. Bjelland I, Dahl AA, Haug TT, Neckelmann D. The validity of the hospital anxiety and depression scale. an updated literature review. *J Psychosom Res*. 2002;52(2):69-77. doi: 10.1016/s0022-3999(01)00296-3.
5. Kjaergaard M, Arfwedson Wang CE, Waterloo K, Jorde R. A study of the psychometric properties of the beck depression inventory-II, the montgomery and åsberg depression rating scale, and the hospital anxiety and depression scale in a sample from a healthy population. *Scand J Psychol*. 2014;55(1):83-89. doi: 10.1111/sjop.12090.

**Shirley Ryan Ability Lab Rehabilitation HADS Page link:** <https://www.sralab.org/rehabilitation-measures/hospital-anxiety-and-depression-scale>

**Videos explaining more information about the HADS:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-XSgElvVVk&t=74s>

**Link to Test**

<https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2016-01-13/HADS.pdf>

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