

Barthel Index - original

Purpose : Assessment of functional independence in the domains of personal care and mobility

Admin time : 5-20 min.

User Friendly : High

Administered by : GP or nurse

Content : The Barthel includes 10 personal activities: feeding, personal toileting, bathing, dressing and undressing, getting on and off a toilet, controlling bladder, controlling bowel, moving from wheelchair to bed and returning, walking on level surface (or propelling a wheelchair if unable to walk) and ascending and descending stairs.

Each item is rated in terms of whether the patient can perform the task independently, with some assistance, or is dependent on help based on observation : (0, 5), (0, 5, 10), (0, 5, 10, 15) dependent on the item.

Author : Mahoney FI, Barthel DW, 1965

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<https://www.cgakit.com/f-1-barthel-index>

Barthel Index - original

Name

Date

Assessed by

Total Score

Barthel Index Activity	Score
FEEDING 0 = unable 5 = needs help cutting, spreading butter, etc., or requires modified diet 10 = independent	
BATHING 0 = dependent 5 = independent (or in shower)	
GROOMING 0 = needs to help with personal care 5 = independent face/hair/teeth/shaving (implements provided)	
DRESSING 0 = dependent 5 = needs help but can do about half unaided 10 = independent (including buttons, zips, laces, etc.)	
BOWELS 0 = incontinent (or needs to be given enemas) 5 = occasional accident 10 = continent	
BLADDER 0 = incontinent, or catheterized and unable to manage alone 5 = occasional accident 10 = continent	
TOILET USE 0 = dependent 5 = needs some help, but can do something alone 10 = independent (on and off, dressing, wiping)	
TRANSFERS (BED TO CHAIR AND BACK) 0 = unable, no sitting balance 5 = major help (one or two people, physical), can sit 10 = minor help (verbal or physical) 15 = independent	
MOBILITY (ON LEVEL SURFACES) 0 = immobile or < 50 yards 5 = wheelchair independent, including corners, > 50 yards 10 = walks with help of one person (verbal or physical) > 50 yards 15 = independent (but may use any aid; for example, stick) > 50 yards	
STAIRS 0 = unable 5 = needs help (verbal, physical, carrying aid) 10 = independent	

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Guidelines for the Barthel Index of Activities of Daily Living

General

- The Index should be used as a record of what a patient **does**, NOT as a record of what a patient **could do**.
- The main aim is to establish degree of independence from any help, physical or verbal, however minor and for whatever reason.
- The need for supervision renders the patient not independent.
- A patient's performance should be established using the best available evidence. Asking the patient, friends/relatives, and nurses will be the usual source, but direct observation and common sense are also important. However, direct testing is not needed.
- Usually the performance over the preceding 24 — 48 hours is important, but occasionally longer periods will be relevant.
- Unconscious patients should score '0' throughout, even if not yet incontinent.
- Middle categories imply that the patient supplies over 50% of the effort.
- Use of aids to be independent is allowed.

Bowels (preceding week)

- If needs enema from nurse, then 'incontinent.'
- 'Occasional' = once a week.

Bladder (preceding week)

- 'Occasional' = less than once a day.
- A catheterized patient who can completely manage the catheter alone is registered as 'continent.'

Grooming (preceding 24— 48 hours)

- Refers to personal hygiene: doing teeth, fitting false teeth, doing hair, shaving, washing face. Implements can be provided by helper.

Toilet Use

- Should be able to reach toilet/commode, undress sufficiently, clean self, dress, and leave.
- 'With help' = can wipe self and do some other of above.

Feeding

- Able to eat any normal food (not only soft food). Food cooked and served by others, but not cut up.
- 'Help' = food cut up, patient feeds self.

Transfer

- From bed to chair and back.
- 'Dependent' = NO sitting balance (unable to sit); two people to lift.
- 'Major help' = one strong/skilled, or two normal people. Can sit up.
- 'Minor help' = one person easily, OR needs any supervision for safety.

Mobility

- Refers to mobility about house or ward, indoors. May use aid. If in wheelchair, must negotiate corners/doors unaided.
- 'Help' = by one untrained person, including supervision/moral support.

Dressing

- Should be able to select and put on all clothes, which may be adapted.
- 'Half' = help with buttons, zips, etc. (*check!*), but can put on some garments alone.

Stairs

- Must carry any walking aid used to be independent.

Bathing

- Usually the most difficult activity.
- Must get in and out unsupervised, and wash self.
- Independent in shower = 'independent' if unsupervised/unaided.

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Scoring

Total possible scores range from 0 – 100.

The Index yields a total score out of 100 – the higher the score, the greater the degree of functional independence.

A score of 0-20 suggests total dependence,
21-60 severe dependence,
61-90 moderate dependence,
91-99 slight dependence.