

The Pain Disability Index (PDI)

Overview: The Pain Disability Index (PDI) is a simple and rapid instrument for measuring the impact that pain has on the ability of a person to participate in essential life activities. This can be used to evaluate patients initially to monitor them over time and to judge the effectiveness of interventions. The index was developed at St. Louis University Medical Center.

Measures of disability related to pain:

- (1) family and home responsibilities: activities related to home and family
- (2) recreation: hobbies sports and other leisure time activities
- (3) social activity: participation with friends and acquaintances other than family members
- (4) occupation: activities partly or directly related to working including housework or volunteering
- (5) sexual behavior: frequency and quality of sex life
- (6) self care: personal maintenance and independent daily living (bathing dressing etc.)
- (7) life-support activity: basic life-supporting behaviors (eating sleeping breathing etc.)

Level of Disability	Points	My Terms (not from paper)
none	0	
	1	
	2	mild
	3	
	4	
	5	moderate
	6	
	7	
	8	severe
	9	
total	10	

pain disability index =

= SUM(points for all 7 parameters)

Interpretation:

- minimal index: 0
- maximal index: 70
- The higher the index the greater the person's disability due to pain.

Performance:

- modest test-retest reliability
- discriminates between patients with low and high levels of disability

References:

Chibnall JT Tait RC. The Pain Disability Index: Factor Structure and Normative Data. Arch Phys Med Rehabil. 1994; 75: 1082-1086.

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Tait RC Chibnall JT Krause S. The pain disability index: psychometric properties. Pain. 1990; 40: 171-182.