

The Activities-specific Balance Confidence (ABC) scale

What is it?

The Activities-specific Balance confidence (ABS) scale is a questionnaire developed to assess older individual's balance confidence in performing daily activities. ABC scale consists of a wide continuum of less and more challenging daily activities.

How to administer it?

The test can be given to older individuals as a test of their balance confidence, during or prior to an interview with the administrator, or over the telephone.

How to score it?

There are 16 items, representing daily activities. Participants are asked to answer, with a score from 0% (not confident at all) to 100% (completely confident) in increments of 10%, how confident they are in performing each activity. The average score obtained is an indication on balance confidence.

How to interpret it?

A score of > 80% indicates high level of functioning. A score of 50%-80% indicates moderate level of functioning. A score of < 50% indicates low levels of functioning. Additionally, a score of < 67% suggests substantial risk of falling.

References

1. Powell LE, Myers AM. The activities-specific balance confidence (ABC) scale. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.* 1995;50:M28-M34.
2. Lajoie Y, Gallagher SP. Predicting falls within the elderly community: comparison of postural sway, reaction time, the Berg balance scale and ABC scale for comparing fallers and non-fallers. *Arch Gerontol Geriatr.* 2004;38:11-26.
3. Myers AM, Fletcher PC, Myers AN, Sherk W. Discriminative and evaluative properties of the ABC Scale. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.* 1998;53:M287-M294.

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What is your gender? How old are you? (years)
 Have you had a fall in the past? How long ago? (years)

- For each of the following activities, please indicate your level of confidence in doing the activity, without losing your balance or becoming unsteady. To do so, choose one of the percentage points on the scale from 0 (no confidence) to 10 (complete confidence)
- If you do not currently do the activity in question, try and imagine how confident you would be if you had to do the activity. If you normally use a walking aid to do the activity or hold onto someone, rate your confidence as it you were using these supports.

1. Walk around the house?	
2. Walk up or down stairs?	
3. Bend over and pick up a slipper from the front of a closet floor?	
4. Reach for a small can off a shelf at eye level?	
5. Stand on your tiptoes and reach for something above your head?	
6. Stand on a chair and reach for something?	
7. Sweep the floor?	
8. Walk outside the house to a car parked in the driveway?	
9. Get into or out of a car?	
10. Walk across a parking lot to the mall?	
11. Walk up or down a ramp?	
12. Walk in a crowded mall where people rapidly walk past you?	
13. Are bumped into by people as you walk through the mall?	
14. Step onto or off an escalator while you are holding onto a railing?	
15. Step onto or off an escalator while holding onto parcels such that you cannot hold onto the railing?	
16. Walk outside on icy sidewalks?	