

Introduction

A clinical tool to assess gait, balance and fall risk. It evaluates usual steady-state walking and more challenging tasks during walking.
Grading: record the lowest category that applies.

1. Gait level surface

Instructions: Walk at your normal speed from here to the next mark (20').

(3) Normal: walks 20', no assistive devices, good speed, no evidence for imbalance, normal gait pattern.

(2) Mild impairment: walks 20', uses assistive devices, slower speed, mild gait deviations.

(1) Moderate impairment: walks 20', slow speed, abnormal gait patterns, evidence for imbalance.

(0) Severe impairment: cannot walk 20' without assistance, severe gait deviations or imbalance.

2. Change in gait speed

Instructions: Begin walking at your normal pace (for 5'), when I tell you "go", walk as fast as you can (for 5'). When I tell you "slow", walk as slowly as you can (for 5').

(3) Normal: Able to smoothly change walking speed without loss of balance or gait deviation. Shows significant difference in walking speeds between normal, fast and slow paces.

(2) Mild impairment: Is able to change speed but demonstrates mild gait deviations, or no gait deviations but unable to achieve a significant change in velocity, or uses an assistive device.

(1) Moderate impairment: Makes only minor adjustments to walking speed, or accomplishes a change in speed with significant gait deviations, or changes speed but loses balance but is able to recover and continue walking.

(0) Severe impairment: Cannot change speeds, or loss balance and has to reach for a wall or be caught.

3. Gait with horizontal head turns.

Instructions: Begin walking at your normal pace. When I tell you to "look right", keep walking straight, but turn your head to the right. Keep looking to the right until I tell you "look left", then keep walking straight and turn your head to the left. Keep your head to the left until I tell you, "look straight", then keep walking straight, but return your head to the center.

(3) Normal: Performs head turns smoothly with no change in gait.

(2) Mild impairment: Performs head turns smoothly with slight change in gait velocity, i.e. minor disruption to smooth gait path or uses walking aid.

(1) Moderate impairment: Performs head turns with moderate change in gait velocity, slows down, staggers, but recovers, can continue to walk.

(0) Severe impairment: Performs task with severe disruption of gait, i.e. staggers outside 15" path, loses balance, stops, reaches for wall.

4. Gait with vertical head turns

Instructions: Begin walking at your normal pace. When I tell you to "look up", keep walking straight, but tip your head and look up. Keep looking up until I tell you, "look down". Then keep walking straight and turn your head down. Keep looking down until I tell you, "look straight", then keep walking straight, but return your head to the centre.

(3) Normal: Performs head turns smoothly with no change in gait.

(2) Mild impairment: Performs head turns smoothly with slight change in gait velocity, i.e. minor disruption to smooth gait path or uses walking aid.

(1) Moderate impairment: Performs head turns with moderate change in gait velocity, slows down, staggers, but recovers, can continue to walk.

(0) Severe impairment: Performs task with severe disruption of gait, i.e. staggers outside 15" path, loses balance, stops, reaches for wall.



5. Gait and pivot turn.

Instructions: Begin walking at your normal pace. When I tell you, "turn and stop", turn as quickly as you can to face the opposite direction and stop.

(3) Normal: Pivot turns safely within 3 seconds and stops quickly with no loss of balance.

(2) Mild impairment: pivot turns safely in >3 seconds and stops with no loss of balance.

(1) Moderate impairment: Turns slowly, requires verbal cueing, requires several small steps to catch balance following turn and stop.

(0) Severe impairment: Cannot turn safely, requires assistance to turn and stop.

6. Step over obstacle

Instructions: Begin walking at your normal speed. When you come to the shoebox, step over it, not around it, and keep walking.

(3) Normal: Is able to step over box without changing gait speed; no evidence for imbalance.

(2) Mild impairment: Is able to step over shoe box, but must slow down and adjust steps to clear box safely.

(1) Moderate impairment: Is able to step over box but must stop, then step over. May require verbal cueing.

(0) Severe impairment: Cannot perform without assistance.

7. Step around obstacles

Instructions: Begin walking at normal speed. When you come to the first cone (**about 6' away**), **walk around the right side of it**. When **you come to the second cone** (6' past first cone), walk around it to the left.

(3) Normal: Is able to walk safely around cones safely without changing gait speed; no evidence of imbalance.

(2) Mild impairment: Is able to step around both cones, but must slow down and adjust steps to clear cones.

(1) Moderate impairment: Is able to clear cones but must significantly slow speed to accomplish task, or requires verbal cueing.

(0) Severe impairment: Unable to clear cones, walks into one or both cones, or requires physical assistance.

8. Steps

Instructions: Walk up these stairs as you would at home.(i.e. using a rail if necessary. At the top, turn around and walk down.

(3) Normal: Alternating feet, no rail.

(2) Mild impairment: Alternating feet, must use rail.

(1) Moderate impairment: Two feet to a stair, must use rail.

(0) Severe impairment: Cannot do safely.

