

# Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)

by **James Lani**

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The **Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)** is a commonly used instrument for quantifying levels of depression. The scale for the BDI was originally created by patients' descriptions of their symptoms – mood, pessimism, sense of failure, self-dissatisfaction, guilt, suicidal ideas, crying, irritability, social withdrawal, insomnia, fatigue, appetite, weight loss, self-accusation. In the first portion of the test, psychological symptoms are assessed whereas the second portion assesses physical symptoms.

The BDI test includes a 21 item self-report using a four-point scale ranging which ranges from 0 (symptom not present) to 3 (symptom very intense). The test takes approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete. There is a shortened version of the test consisting of 7 items intended to be used by primary care providers.

After the American Psychiatric Association (APA) published the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fourth Edition (DSM-IV), the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was revised in 1996 to reflect changes to the diagnostic criteria for Major Depressive Disorder, becoming the **BDI-II**. The BDI-II also contains 21 questions, scored from 0 to 3.

## **Author**

Aaron T. Beck, M.D.

## **Validity and Reliability**

The BDI test is widely known and has been tested for content, concurrent, and construct validity. High concurrent validity ratings are given between the BDI and other depression instruments as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory and the Hamilton Depression Scale; 0.77 correlation rating was calculated when compared with inventory and psychiatric ratings. The BDI has also showed high construct validity with the medical symptoms it measures. Beck's study reported a coefficient alpha rating of .92 for outpatients and .93 for college student samples. The BDI-II positively correlated with the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale,  $r = 0.71$ , had a one-week test-retest reliability of  $r = 0.93$  and an internal consistency  $\alpha = .91$ .

## **Obtaining the BDI**

[Pearson Assessments](#)

## **Administration, Analysis and Reporting**

Statistics Solutions consists of a team of professional methodologists and statisticians that can assist the student or professional researcher in administering the survey instrument, collecting the data, conducting the analyses and explaining the results.

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## **References**

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## **Other Depression Instruments**

- [Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale](#)
- [Positive and Negative Affect Schedule](#)
- [Child Depression Inventory](#)
- [Derogatis Affect Balance Scale](#)