



Dyspnea Assessment Guide

Choose a number between 0–5
that best describes your breathing.

0 No shortness of breath.

1 A little short of breath.

2 A little more short of breath.

3 Even more short of breath.

4 Severe shortness of breath.

5 Shortness of breath
as bad as it can get.

Tell Me About Your Shortness of Breath

Words to describe shortness of breath

- Tightness in the chest
- Air hunger (often associated with asthma)
- Hard to breathe (related to the work of breathing)
- Shortness of breath (often associated with COPD)
- Suffocation
- Heavy breathing
- Coughing
- Not getting enough air

Intensity (0–5)

- If 0 is no shortness of breath and 5 is as bad as your breathing could get, what is your shortness of breath now? In the last 24 hours?

Life with dyspnea

- What does your shortness of breath mean to you? How does your shortness of breath affect your daily life?

Duration

- When do you experience shortness of breath? Is there a time of day that is worse than another?

Aggravating and alleviating factors

- What makes shortness of breath better? What makes it worse?

Affects

- Eating
- Dressing
- Sleeping
- Relationships
- Ability to perform household chores
- Bathing

Associated symptoms

- Anxiousness
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Fear/worry
- Tachycardia
- Fatigue
- Restlessness
- Confusion
- Concentration
- Social isolation
- Use of accessory muscles for breathing

Medication use

- What medication have you used? How much O₂ are you using?



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