

# Center for Epidemiologic Studies – Depression Scale (CES-D)

**Purpose:** The 20 items in the CES-D scale reflect on the components of depression in nine different groups as defined by the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual–5. These components include:

- Sadness (Dysphoria)
- Loss of Interest (Anhedonia)
- Appetite
- Sleep
- Thinking/Concentration
- Guilt/Worthlessness
- Tiredness/Fatigue
- Movement/Agitation
- Suicidal Ideation

It is important to screen for depression, especially in mothers, because their wellbeing greatly affects the wellbeing of their child. Depressed mothers have been shown to:

- Talk less to infants
- Express fewer positive facial emotions
- Show less physical affection
- Use more harsh discipline/ corporal punishment
- Be less attached
- Report poorer preventive practices including:
  - Decreased use of car seats
  - Electrical plug covers
  - Smoke detectors
  - Back to sleep

**Population:** Pregnant women, and parents/families of children between the ages of 0-5

**When to Administer:**

- Week 3 of the intake process
  - Pre-Natal Participants: 4 month post delivery
- Annually based on first screening date

**Time Required:** 30 minutes

## Administration

The CES-D should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and 5 minutes to score. Have the mother report on how often she's experienced the following 20 feelings within the past week. If needed, you may read aloud and guide the mother through each item and answer. Please encourage parent to respond to all items.

## Scoring & Interpretation

The response values for each question are:

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The range of possible scores falls between **0-60**. **If more than four questions are missing answers, do not score the CES-D questionnaire.**

A cutoff score of **16 or greater** reflects individuals at risk for clinical depression. More specifically:

**0-16:** No to mild depressive symptomatology

**16-23:** Moderate depressive symptomatology

**24-60:** Severe depressive symptomatology

## Entering the Data into DCRS

CES-D data are entered into the Assessments tab of DCRS. Enter the date the assessment was completed and the status of the assessment at the top of the page.

Under the heading “Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale”, enter the total score “CES-D Score”. The score is entered twice to protect against possible data entry errors. A warning message will appear if the scores do not match.

A copy of the completed assessment should also be uploaded in the “Documents” area at the bottom of the DCRS Assessments tab.