



# AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

## Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)

### Construct: Depressive symptoms

**Description of Measure:** The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item, self-report rating inventory that measures characteristic attitudes and symptoms of depression (Beck, et al., 1961). The BDI has been developed in different forms, including several computerized forms, a card form (May, Urquhart, Tarran, 1969, cited in Groth-Marnat, 1990), the 13-item short form and the more recent BDI-11 by Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996. (See Steer, Rissmiller & Beck, 2000 for information on the clinical utility of the BDI-11.) The BDI takes approximately 10 minutes to complete, although clients require a fifth – sixth grade reading level to adequately understand the questions (Groth-Marnat, 1990).



Internal consistency for the BDI ranges from .73 to .92 with a mean of .86. (Beck, Steer, & Garbin, 1988). Similar reliabilities have been found for the 13-item short form (Groth-Marnat, 1990). The BDI demonstrates high internal consistency, with alpha coefficients of .86 and .81 for psychiatric and non-psychiatric populations respectively (Beck et al., 1988).

### References

- Beck, A.T., Ward, C. H., Mendelson, M., Mock, J., & Erbaugh, J. (1961) An inventory for measuring depression. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 4, 561-571.
- Beck, A. T., Steer, R.A., & Garbin, M.G. (1988) Psychometric properties of the Beck Depression Inventory: Twenty-five years of evaluation. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 8(1), 77-100.
- Groth-Marnat G. (1990). *The handbook of psychological assessment* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hojat, M., Shapurian, R., Mehrya, A.H., (1986). Psychometric properties of a Persian version of the short form of the Beck Depression Inventory for Iranian college students, *Psychological Reports*, 59(1), 331-338.
- Steer, R. A., Rissmiller, D. J.& Beck, A.T., (2000) Use of the Beck Depression Inventory with depressed geriatric patients. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 38(3), 311-318.

---

### Find this article at:

<http://www.apa.org/pi/about/publications/caregivers/practice-settings/assessment/tools/beck-depression.aspx>