

Name of Instrument: **Morse Fall Scale**

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**Privacy Use Cost:** \$

**Public Use Cost:** \$

**Year Developed:** 1985

**Where to obtain Instrument:**

- Referenced article
- Contact author

**Description of the Instrument**

- This instrument is a rater-administered instrument designed to identify individuals at risk for anticipated physiological falls.
- The scale is comprised of 6 assessment items: history of falling, secondary diagnosis, use of ambulatory aid, intravenous therapy, gait and mental status. Presence of a risk factor is rated as “yes” or “no” for three of the items (e.g. history of falling). For three items, ratings are based on two or three descriptors. For example, the descriptors for the category, mental status, are: “oriented to own ability” and “overestimates/forgets limitations”. Scores assigned to each response are recorded.
- **Scoring:** “Yes” or “no” responses or descriptors for each item have been assigned a rating in five point increments ranging from 0 to 30 points. Based on the total score, individuals are categorized as “high”, “medium” or “low” risk of falling.

**Form of instrument:**

- Checklists
- Hazard/Risk Assessment Tools

**Method of delivery:**

- In-person interview/assessment
- Audit of records

**Relevance to injury/ Percentage of the instrument specific to injury**

- Assessment of risk of falls

**Time to administer or complete the instrument**

- Rater-administered in less than one minute

**Methods of data analyses:**

- Qualitative
- Quantitative

**Setting/sample instrument used in:**

- A sample of 100 patients who had fallen and a randomly selected sample of 100 patients who had not fallen.

**Was it pilot tested?** No

**Pilot test sample:****Reliability Measures****Validity Measures**

Additional testing completed by Eagle et al. (1999) on a sample of elderly inpatients indicated the following:

- Sensitivity (ability to detect falls when they are present) = 72%
- Specificity (ability to identify correctly the absence of falls) = 51%
- Positive Predictive Value (how well test predicted compared to actual number of falls) = 38%
- Negative Predictive Value (how well negative test correctly predicts absence of falls) = 81%
- Accuracy (overall rate of agreement between the test and the actual number of falls) = 57%
- Prevalence (ratio of the number of people who have fallen divided by the total number of people at risk for falling) = 30%

**Reference**

Morse, J.M., Morse, R.M., & Tylko, S.J. (1989). Development of a scale to identify the fall-prone patient. Canadian Journal on Aging, 8,366-377.

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**Other References**

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Eagle, J., Salamara, S., Whitman, D., Evans, L.A., Ho, E., & Olde, J. (1999). Comparison of three instruments in predicting accidental falls in selected inpatients in a general teaching hospital. Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 25(7), 40-45.

**Keywords:** fall scale, falls, risk.