Dimensional Anhedonia Rating Scale (DARS)

DARS

The DARS is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure state anhedonia, that is, the current reduction in interest, motivation, effort expended, and pleasure experienced in response to usually rewarding experiences. It explores four clinically useful domains: hobbies, food and drinks, social activities, and sensory experiences. Its distinctive feature is that it asks the patient to name their own enjoyed activities or experiences, which improves clinical relevance and limits the cultural bias associated with imposed examples. The DARS is particularly useful in the assessment of depressive disorders and mood disorders, as well as in the longitudinal monitoring of anhedonia in clinical practice, in research, or during treatment. Its subdimension profile helps identify whether the impairment mainly concerns interest, initiating action, effort investment, or pleasure itself.

Number of questions	17 questions
Estimated duration	10 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Dimensional Anhedonia Rating Scale
Target audience	Adults
Authors	Sakina J. Rizvi, Lena C. Quilty, Beth A. Sproule, Anna Cyriac, R. Michael Bagby, Sidney H. Kennedy (2015)
Category	Depression, Mood disorders

Preview of the 17 questions

Think of your favorite pastimes/hobbies that are NOT primarily social:

I would enjoy these activities

Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Mostly | Very much

Think of your favorite pastimes/hobbies that are NOT primarily social:

I would spend time doing these activities

Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Mostly | Very much

Think of your favorite pastimes/hobbies that are NOT primarily social:

I want to do these activities

Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Mostly | Very much

Think of your favorite pastimes/hobbies that are NOT primarily social:

These activities would interest me

Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Mostly | Very much

Think of your favorite foods or drinks:

I would make an effort to get/make these foods/drinks

Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Mostly | Very much

Scoring & interpretation

Each item is rated from 0 to 4, from not at all to very much. The total score is the sum of the 17 items, ranging from 0 to 68. Subscores can also be calculated by domain: hobbies 0 to 16, food and drinks 0 to 16, social activities 0 to 16, sensory experiences 0 to 20. The higher the score, the less pronounced the anhedonia. Conversely, a low score indicates more severe anhedonia. There is no universally validated diagnostic cutoff for routine clinical use, so interpretation should be based on the overall level, the subdomain profile, changes over time, and the clinical context.