Multidimensional Health Locus of Control Scales (MHLC)

MHLC

The MHLC is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure a person's beliefs about the control of their health. It classically assesses three major dimensions: internal health locus of control, the role of chance and the influence of powerful others, particularly health professionals or the people around the person. This tool is widely used in health psychology, behavioral medicine and clinical research to better understand treatment adherence, preventive behaviors, illness perception and patient engagement in care. The version most widely used in general practice is based on 18 items divided into three subscales. The MHLC helps psychologists identify whether a person considers their health status to depend mainly on their own actions, on uncontrollable external factors or on authority figures.

Number of questions	18 questions
Estimated duration	5 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Multidimensional Health Locus of Control Scales
Target audience	Adults
Authors	Kenneth A. Wallston, Barbara S. Wallston, Robert DeVellis (1978)

Preview of the 18 questions

If I get sick, it is my own behavior which determines how soon I get well again.

Strongly disagree | Moderately disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Moderately agree | Strongly agree

No matter what I do, if I am going to get sick, I will get sick.

Strongly disagree | Moderately disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Moderately agree | Strongly agree

Having regular contact with my physician is the best way for me to avoid illness.

Strongly disagree | Moderately disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Moderately agree | Strongly agree

Most things that affect my health happen to me by accident.

Strongly disagree | Moderately disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Moderately agree | Strongly agree

Whenever I don't feel well, I should consult a medically trained professional.

Strongly disagree | Moderately disagree | Slightly disagree | Slightly agree | Moderately agree | Strongly agree

Administer your questionnaires online

Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

Items are generally rated on a 6-point Likert scale, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Scoring is done by subscale rather than as an overall total score: 6 items measure internal control, 6 chance and 6 powerful others. The scores of each subscale are summed separately; the higher the score, the stronger the corresponding belief. Interpretation should compare the relative profile across the three dimensions rather than look for a single summary index. Depending on the versions and adaptations, some items may require checking the scoring key in the manual or the reference publication.

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“Reliable, relevant assessments to better understand my patients' psychological state”

Benjamin G. - Occupational Psychologist