

Penn State Worry Questionnaire (PSWQ)

Resource summary: The PSWQ is a 16-item self-report questionnaire that measures worrying (e.g., how much a person worries, the effects of worrying on a person).

Penn State Worry Questionnaire (PSWQ)

Instructions: Rate each of the following statements on a scale of 1 (“not at all typical of me”) to 5 (“very typical of me”). Please do not leave any items blank.

	Not at all typical of me					Very typical of me
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. If I do not have enough time to do everything, I do not worry about it.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. My worries overwhelm me.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I do not tend to worry about things.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Many situations make me worry.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. I know I should not worry about things, but I just cannot help it.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. When I am under pressure I worry a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I am always worrying about something.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I find it easy to dismiss worrisome thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. As soon as I finish one task, I start to worry about everything else I have to do.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I never worry about anything.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. When there is nothing more I can do about a concern, I do not worry about it anymore.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. I have been a worrier all my life.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. I notice that I have been worrying about things.	1	2	3	4	5	
14. Once I start worrying, I cannot stop.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. I worry all the time.	1	2	3	4	5	
16. I worry about projects until they are all done.	1	2	3	4	5	

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Scoring: Each of the 16 items is rated on a 5-point scale. Items 1, 3, 8, 10, and 11 are reverse scored as follows:

- Very typical of me = 1 (circled 5 on the sheet)
- Circled 4 on the sheet = 2
- Circled 3 on the sheet = 3
- Circled 2 on the sheet = 4
- Not at all typical of me = 5 (circled 1 on the sheet)

The remaining items are scored regularly. The item scores are added to produce a total score ranging from 16 to 80, with higher scores reflecting more worry. **A score of 50 or higher by an older person could mean significant worries are present**, but research on cutoff scores in older people is too limited to know for certain.¹⁴⁷¹ Do not assume that an older client who scores below 50 does not have anxiety.