

Johns Hopkins Highest Level of Mobility (JH-HLM) Scale

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Background - A decline in functional status is common during acute care hospitalization. This decline can be mitigated through hospital-based early activity and mobility programs. An important component of such programs is the systematic measurement of patient mobility. We developed the Johns Hopkins Highest Level of Mobility (JH-HLM) scale to serve as a regular assessment of patient mobility.

Johns Hopkins Highest Level of Mobility (JH-HLM) Scale			
MOBILITY LEVEL		Score	
↑	WALK	250+ FEET	8
		25+ FEET	7
		10+ STEPS	6
↓	STAND	≥1 MINUTE	5
	CHAIR	TRANSFER to CHAIR	4
	BED	SIT AT EDGE OF BED	3
		TURN SELF/BED ACTIVITY*	2
		ONLY LYING	1

*Bed activity includes passive or active range of motion, movement of arms or legs, and bed exercises (e.g., cycle ergometry, neuromuscular electrical stimulation).

The JH-HLM scale was developed based on input from multiple disciplines (nursing, rehabilitation therapists, physicians, etc.) for the following uses:

- To record the mobility that a hospitalized patient *actually* does, not what they are capable of doing. Documentation is based on observation and should reflect the highest level of mobility the patient performed since the last documentation. We recommend JH-HLM documentation twice daily, during waking hours, on all patients.
- To standardize the description of patient mobility across multi-disciplinary providers (i.e. physicians, nurses, rehabilitation therapists, support staff).
- To set individual patient mobility goals during hospitalization (e.g. move up 1 step on the scale tomorrow).
- A performance measure for quality improvement projects aimed at promoting patient mobility.

Case examples of JH-HLM scoring:

A) A nurse assumes care of a patient at 8am, after which the patient ambulated to the bathroom (estimated at less than 25 feet) with assistance of walker and another staff member. Otherwise, the patient has been sitting in the chair watching TV since last assessment.

Correct JH-HLM: 6

B) A patient takes 3 steps from the bed to the commode.

Correct JH-HLM: 5 (if patient stood ≥1 minute during this mobilization), otherwise 4.

C) A nurse instructs the patient to perform straight leg lifts and arm exercises while they are in bed.

Correct JH-HLM: 2

D) A nurse is ready to document JH-HLM at 4pm for a patient who is currently sitting on the edge of the bed. The last HLM documentation was at 8am. The nurse knows the patient walked around the unit, alone, with their walker in the early afternoon.

Correct JH-HLM: 8 (presuming that the distance around the unit is >250 feet)

Note: Researchers at Johns Hopkins University are currently studying the reliability and validity of this scale. If you wish to use this scale, it should be referred to as the Johns Hopkins – Highest Level of Mobility (JH-HLM) scale. **Please notify us if you use this scale or if you have any questions, via contacting Erik Hoyer, MD at ehoyer1@jhmi.edu or Michael Friedman, PT, MBA at mfried26@jhmi.edu.** By contacting us, we can advise you regarding any new data about the scale. **If you use this scale please fill out the [Request for Use](#) document or include the following information into your email.**

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