

# MARYLAND TRAIT AND STATE DEPRESSION SCALE (MTSD)

## User Instructions and Questionnaires

Joshua Chiapelli, MD  
Katie L. Nugent, PhD  
Kavita Thangavelu, MSW  
Katherine Searcy, MSW  
L. Elliot Hong, MD

This scale is registered for copyright (TXU001868692). Under this copyright, the scale is free for non-for-profit academic, research, or individual patient care use. No additional inquiry is required. **Disclaimer:** It is the user's full responsibility to understand the implications of using this instrument before administering to a respondent. Individuals who are not trained to evaluate and manage respondent's reporting of any of these symptoms should not attempt to use this instrument. User should bear all responsibility associated with the consequence and outcome of the use of this instrument. For-profit use of this scale please contact Dr. Hong, Maryland Psychiatric Research Center, University of Maryland School of Medicine, P.O. Box 21247, Baltimore, MD 21228. [ehong@mprc.umaryland.edu](mailto:ehong@mprc.umaryland.edu)

## Instructions for Interviewers

The MTSD consists of 36 items rated in 5-point Likert scales, divided into two sections; the 'state' section is intended to capture current depressive symptoms experienced in the past 7 days, and the 'trait' section is intended to capture the frequency of depressive symptoms throughout adulthood, **except** the past 7 days.

MTSD was developed after reviewing several depression rating instruments, and finding that most existing scales were developed before the recent versions of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Therefore, items in the MTSD are based on criteria currently used to make a diagnosis for major depressive disorder in the DSM-V, by rewording the DSM-V items into a self-reporting format.

For example, the DSM-V criterion of "markedly diminished interest or pleasure in activities" is formulated as the following two "state" items:

1. "I have lost interest in enjoyable activities" in the past 7 days, and
2. "I spend less time doing activities or hobbies than I used to because my mood is low" in the past 7 days.

The same DSM-V criterion is formulated as the following two 'trait' items:

1. "I have felt less interested in enjoyable activities than my peers" in the course of one's adult life excluding the past 7 days, and
2. "I have not spent much time doing activities or hobbies because I feel down" in the course of one's adult life excluding the past 7 days.

Similar reformulations of the DSM-V criteria are used for the rest of the items in MTSD.

Although the instruction is specified for 'adulthood', we have used the instrument with persons aged 12 and up. In those cases, we redefine 'adulthood' as 'in your whole life since age 12'.

Symptom severity can be assessed by frequency, intensity, or both. Self-rating for intensity is more subjective as compared with frequency when using a self-report format, which can be a major source of noise and unreliability during group-based analyses. Therefore, MTSD is designed to ask respondents to report symptom severity based only on frequency of occurrence within the respective state or trait temporal window in this self-rating instrument. Subjective rating for intensity of the symptoms is not asked.

The responses specify frequency of the individual's experience of the symptom along a Likert scale ranging from 0-4. The anchors are defined for the state and trait scales as the following.

State (in the past 7 days):

0 = 'not at all'

1 = '< 1 day'

2 = '1-2 days'

3 = '3-4 days'

4 = '5-7 days'

Trait (in one's adult life except the past 7 days):

0 = 'never'

1 = 'experienced briefly, but less than once a year'

2 = 'experienced more than once a year, but less than once a month on average'

3 = 'experienced intensely for some weeks in my life time and in other times less frequent but still there, OR experienced almost every month'

4 = 'experienced many times in a month for almost every month of my adult life'

The anchors for 'trait' measures are non-trivial because the anchors are trying to capture large variations in depression experience over the life time of many individuals using merely five levels. To achieve good reliability on the trait items it is important to carefully explain the instructions to make sure the respondent understand and remember the time period and the anchors.

Each section consists of 18 items. These two sections should be printed on two separate pages and presented to the respondent one at a time. Give specific instructions on the temporal window each section is intended for, and explain the anchors for the section only. When one section is completed, have the respondent hand back that section, inspect it for completeness, then give the respondent the next section with instruction for the section.

The scale should be administered in a "self-rating under clinical interview environment" format. Treat this as a formal clinical interview. An interviewer should sit with the respondent as if this is a rater-administered interview, and provide instructions reiterating the time course of interest for each part of the instrument. The interviewer should remain in the room as the respondent completes the scale, but should not directly inspect what the respondent is rating so that symptom rating remains strictly self-report. Raters can explain voluntary questions from the respondent to assist them in understanding the questions, but should not instruct on how to choose the actual rating. These procedures are to maximize consistency in the understanding of the questions and anchors, minimize variability in the style and judgment from interviewers, and ensure the respondent's attentiveness to each question.

(Do not present the face page and the instruction pages to the respondent)

## Maryland Trait and State Depression – State Scale (MTSD-S)

Additional header information can be placed here

**Instruction:** This scale asks your general experience of depression. Please read each question carefully and then circle the number to indicate how you felt in the recent week, that is, in the past 7 days. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement but give the rating that most closely describes your recent feelings.

	Not at all	<1 day	1-2 days	3-4 days	5-7 days
1. It is hard for me to feel happy.	0	1	2	3	4
2. I have lost interest in enjoyable activities.	0	1	2	3	4
3. My appetite changes a lot depending on my mood.	0	1	2	3	4
4. I sleep much more than usual because of my mood.	0	1	2	3	4
5. I feel sluggish and slow.	0	1	2	3	4
6. I feel sad.	0	1	2	3	4
7. I have no energy for anything.	0	1	2	3	4
8. I cry because my mood is low.	0	1	2	3	4
9. I can not get motivated.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I am burdened with feelings of guilt.	0	1	2	3	4
11. I don't sleep enough when my mood is low because I think of negative thoughts.	0	1	2	3	4
12. The blues stay with me no matter what I do.	0	1	2	3	4
13. I spend less time doing activities or hobbies than I used to because my mood is low.	0	1	2	3	4
14. I feel that I want to die.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I have a heavy feeling in my arms or legs when my mood is down.	0	1	2	3	4
16. My weight goes up or down a lot depending on my mood.	0	1	2	3	4
17. Even though I did not do any thing wrong, I have felt that I deserved to be punished.	0	1	2	3	4
18. I have no hope for my future.	0	1	2	3	4

## Maryland Trait and State Depression – Trait Scale (MTSD-T)

Additional header information can be placed here

**Instruction:** This scale asks your general experience of depression, again. However, this time it is asking how you generally feel in most of your adult life, but excluding how you felt in the past one week. Try not to be influenced just by how you feel at this moment.

**IMPORTANT:** The scale for rating is different here. Please read the scale a couple of times before you start.

0	1	2	3	4
Never	Experienced briefly, but less than once a year	Experienced more than once a year, but less than once a month on average	Experienced intensely for some weeks in my life time and in other times less frequent but still there, OR experienced almost every month	Experienced many times in a month for almost every month of my adult life

<b>1. It has been hard for me to feel happy throughout my life.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>2. I have felt less interested in enjoyable activities than my peers.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>3. I often lose my appetite when my mood is low.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>4. I sleep more than most people when my mood is low.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>5. I felt sluggish and slow most of my life.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>6. I often feel sad most of my life.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>7. I have not had sufficient energy for most things.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>8. I cried often because my mood was low.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>9. It has usually been hard for me to get motivated.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>10. I have been burdened with feelings of guilt for much of my life.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>11. I don't sleep enough when my mood is low because I think of negative thoughts.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>12. The blues have stayed with me no matter what I do.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>13. I have not spent much time doing activities or hobbies because I feel down.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>14. I have felt that I wanted to die.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>15. I often have a heavy feeling in my arms or legs when my mood is down.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>16. My weight has gone up or down a lot depending on my mood.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>17. Even though I did not do any thing wrong, I often felt that I deserved to be punished.</b>	0	1	2	3	4
<b>18. I feel hopeless about my future.</b>	0	1	2	3	4