

SF-36v2 Primer: 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey Version 2.0

The **Short-Form 36 Health Survey Version 2.0 (SF-36)** is a multipurpose health survey that measures overall health status, functional status, and health-related quality of life. It is a generic measure and its use is not restricted to a single disease state. Using an eight-scale profile of physical and mental health summary measures, the SF-36 is a valid and reliable tool that allows comparisons between and within clinical and general populations.

- The SF-36 is used to monitor specific and general populations to estimate disease burden
- After deployment, the SF-36 can be used to quantify the severity of an individual's post-deployment health issue at any point in time as well as allowing comparisons of his or her health status over time

Administering the SF-36 Health Survey

- The SF-36 can be completed by the patient using pencil and paper or computerized administration as well as by a trained administrator on the patient's behalf
- The survey can usually be completed within 5-10 minutes

SF-36 Scoring

- The survey produces 8 scale scores:
 - Physical Functioning (PF)
 - Role Physical (RP)
 - Bodily Pain (BP)
 - General Health Perceptions (GH)
 - Vitality (VT)
 - Social Functioning (SF)
 - Role Emotional (RE)
 - Mental Health (MH)



SF-36v2 Primer (Side Two)

SF-36 Scoring (Cont.)

- Two summary scales can be used
 - Physical Component Score (PCS): Combines PF, RP, BP, and GH
 - Mental Component Score (MCS): Combines VT, SF, RE, and MH
- Scale scores are a sum of all items in the specific scale and do not require further standardization or weighting
 - Scores are standardized to a 0-100 range converting the lowest possible score to 0 and the highest to 100
 - Scores are norm-based: Mean = 50, Standard Deviation = 10

Score Interpretation

- 50 is average; 0-49 is below average; 51-100 is above average
- Score standardization facilitates quick interpretation
- Scale scores can be interpreted based on deviance from the mean: 10 points = 1 Standard Deviation

- Scores below 50 indicate below average health status and should trigger further investigation, with increasing deviations providing higher need for further assessment
- Results may be used as outcome measures, e.g. scores for re-deploying combat troops may indicate combat has affected their health

Follow-up and Ongoing Care

- All military health system beneficiaries with health concerns they believe are deployment-related, regardless of time of identification, are encouraged to seek medical care
- Patients should be asked, “**Is your health concern today related to a deployment?**” during all primary care visits
- If the patient replies “**yes**,” the provider should follow the Post-Deployment Health Clinical Practice Guideline (PDH-CPG) available through the DHCC and www.PDHealth.mil

