



Simple Physical Activity Questionnaire (SIMPAQ)

Instruction manual and scoring

Version 4.1

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Introduction

This manual describes the recommended method of administering and scoring the SIMPAQ via direct interview or telephone. For updates regarding the SIMPAQ please see www.simpaq.org.

SIMPAQ is a physical activity measurement tool designed to be used as a structured interview. SIMPAQ should take between 3-8 minutes to complete and can be administered by clinicians or researchers. SIMPAQ is structured to start with details about time in bed, structured exercise and progresses to incidental or non-structured physical activity. This manual describes each item in detail.

Summary characteristics

SIMPAQ assesses combined physical activity across all domains including leisure time, domestic, work and transport-related activities. SIMPAQ does not aim to specify or discriminate activities based on intensity, but rather groups activities into either walking, exercise /sport or incidental/other categories. SIMPAQ has been structured to provide a snapshot of a 24-hour period that is representative of the previous week and flows from sedentary time to walking, structured exercise/sport to incidental/other activities. Completion of SIMPAQ requires simple calculations allowing the interviewer to clarify and crosscheck responses.

Overview of variables

The following continuous variables can be calculated from SIMPAQ:

- Sedentary time (Box 2A) 'SedTime'
- Time spent napping (Box 2B) 'NapTime'
- Walking time per day (Box 3) 'WalkTime'
- Walking days (Question 3) 'WalkDays'
- Exercise and sport time (Table 4B) 'ExsportTime'
- Exercise and sports sessions (Table 4B) 'Exsportsessions'
- Other physical activity (Box 5) 'OtherTime'



Should the responder have difficulty providing an estimate, the average of the times provided should be used, for example a response of “between 7am and 9am” should be recorded as 8am or 08:00. Responses should be rounded to 15-minute intervals (00, 15, 30 or 45).

Box 1: Overnight time in bed

The interviewer is required to manually calculate how long the responder spends overnight in bed. This is the elapsed time difference between Questions 1A and 1B.

The interviewer then subtracts the time spent in bed from 24:00 to determine how many waking hours the responder should account for with the answers to the subsequent questions.



2B. How much of this time is spent napping?



Q4B. How many minutes did you spend on each activity on each day?

Table 4 is designed to assist responders with recall by providing prompts. For example if the responder simply says 'no exercise', the interviewer can conduct a brief check by specifically asking about each day. In some cases, the interviewer may have prior knowledge regarding the responder's exercise participation, for example attendance a weekly sports group, which the interviewer could then use to prompt the responder's recall.

The purpose of the table in Question 4 is to allow the interviewer to record greater detail regarding the mode of activity, the duration as well as the sessions. For people at high risk of sedentary behaviour, simply standing up and moving, for example performing body weight exercises such as sit-to-stands, or walking around the house is of considerable clinical interest. As such the number of sessions should be recorded in order for clinicians to monitor and assess total sessions of activity. In addition to recording the type of exercise, interviewers can record the intensity of each physical activity using a simple visual analogue scale (0-10) or Borg's Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE 6-20).

Using the information in table 4B determine the average hours of sport/exercise per day and record this in Box 4.

Question 5: Other physical activities

Q5. Now think about any other physical activities that you did as part of your work, or activities you did while at home such as gardening or household chores. How many minutes did you spend on these activities on most days? Prompt: this does not include walking, sport or exercise.

Question 5 is designed to capture additional physical activities not captured by Questions 3 or 4. The structure of the question is similar to Questions 1 and 2 as it asks for an average time per day as opposed to number of days and minutes. Record in Box 5 the average hours per day.



Notes

Check