

Administration of the Tinetti Gait & Balance Instrument

The Tinetti Gait and Balance Instrument is designed to determine an elders risk for falls within the next year. It takes about 8-10 minutes to complete. The evaluator should review the questions prior to evaluation of the patient and ask any questions regarding the Instrument prior to beginning. The patient is asked to complete the gait portion first with the evaluator walking close behind the elder and evaluating gait steppage and drift. The patient is then asked to complete the balance portion with the evaluator again standing close by the patient (towards the right and in front). The patient is then asked to sit and the score is then totaled.

Scoring— The higher the score, the better the performance. Scoring is done on a three point scale with a range on each item of 0-2 with 0 representing the most impairment. Individual scores are then combined to form three scales: a Gait Scale, a Balance Scale and then an overall Gait and Balance score. The maximum score for gait is 12 points while the maximum for Balance is 16 points with a total maximum for the overall Tinetti Instrument of 28 points.

Score Interpretation

<19 High Risk for Falls
19-24 Risk for Falls

Not Clear on What Steppage Is?—Evaluators usually have the most questions about steppage. For a complete tutorial on gait analysis click below.

[Gait Analysis Tutorial](#)

Department of Family Practice
TINETTI BALANCE AND GAIT EVALUATION

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

BALANCE

Instructions: Subject is seated in hard armless chair. The following maneuvers are tested.

1. **Sitting balance**
 - leans or slides in chair = 0
 - steady, safe = 1
2. **Arise**
 - unable without help = 0
 - able but uses arm to help = 1
 - able without use of arms = 2
3. **Attempts to arise**
 - unable without help = 0
 - able, but requires more than one attempt = 1
 - able to arise with one attempt = 2
4. **Immediate standing balance (first 5 seconds)**
 - unsteady (stagger, moves feet marked trunk sway steady, but uses walker or cane or grabs other object for support) = 0
 - steady without walker or cane or other support = 2
5. **Standing balance**
 - unsteady = 0
 - steady, but wide stance (medial heels more than 4" apart) or uses cane, walker or other support = 1
 - narrow stance without support = 2
6. **Nudge (subject at maximum position with feet as close together as possible, examiner pushes lightly on subject's sternum with palm of hand 3 times.)**
 - begins to fall = 0
 - staggers, grabs, but catches self = 1
 - steady = 2
7. **Eyes closed (at maximum position #6)**
 - unsteady = 0
 - steady = 2
8. **Turn 360°**
 - discontinuous steps = 0
 - continuous = 1
9. **Sit down**
 - unsafe (misjudged distance; falls into chair) = 0
 - uses arms or not a smooth motion = 1
 - safe, smooth motion = 2

BALANCE SCORE: _____ /16

GAIT

Instructions: Subject stands with examiner. Walks down hallway or across room, first at his/her "usual" pace, then back at "rapid, but safe" pace (using usual walking aid such as cane, walker).

10. Initiation of gait (immediately after told to "go")
- any hesitancy or multiple attempts to start = 0
 - no hesitancy = 1
11. Step length and height
- a. Right swing foot
 - does not pass left stance foot with step = 0
 - passes left stance foot = 1
 - right foot does not clear floor completely with step = 0
 - right foot completely clears floor = 1
 - b. Left swing foot
 - does not pass right stance foot with step = 0
 - passes right stance foot = 1
 - left foot does not clear floor completely with step = 0
 - left foot completely clears floor = 1
12. Step symmetry
- right and left step length not equal (estimate) = 0
 - right and left step appear equal = 1
13. Step continuity
- stopping or discontinuity between steps = 0
 - steps appear continuous = 1
14. Path (estimated in relation to floor tiles, 12 inch diameter.
Observe excursion of one foot over about 10 feet of course).
- marked deviation = 0
 - mild/moderate deviation or uses walking aid = 1
 - straight without walking aid = 2
15. Trunk
- marked sway or uses walking aid = 0
 - no sway but flexion of knees or back or spreads arms out while walking = 1
 - no sway, no flexion, no use of arms and no walking aid = 2
16. Walk stance
- heels apart = 0
 - heels almost touching while walking = 1

GAIT SCORE: _____ /12

TOTAL SCORE: _____ /28