

User Manual - Decision Regret Scale

Definition

The 'Decision Regret Scale' measures “distress or remorse after a (health care) decision” [1].

Sample Tool

Regret Scale

Please reflect on the first decision you made about _____ after talking with your physician. Please show how strongly you agree or disagree with these statements by circling a number from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) which best fits your views about your decision.

1.	It was the right decision	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
2.	I regret the choice that was made	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
3.	I would go for the same choice if I had to do it over again	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
4.	The choice did me a lot of harm	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
5.	The decision was a wise one	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree

Decision Regret Scale © AM O'Connor, 1996 University of Ottawa

Directions for Use

In a short introductory statement, respondents should be asked to reflect on a specific past decision, and then asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements in the regret scale by indicating a number from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree) that best indicates their level of agreement.

Regret is measured at a point in time when the respondent can reflect on the effects of the decision.

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Scoring and Interpretation

Items 2 and 4 should be reverse coded so that, for each item, a *higher number will indicate more regret*. To help others interpret the score more readily with other scales ranging from 0 to 100, these scores can then be converted to a 0-100 scale by subtracting 1 from each item and multiplying by 25. To obtain a final score, each item is summed and averaged. A score of 0 means no regret; a score of 100 means high regret.

Psychometric Properties

Psychometric testing study [1] with several applications showed:

Alpha coefficient: $\alpha = 0.81$ to 0.92

The scale correlates with satisfaction with the decision ($r = -0.40$ to -0.60), decisional conflict ($r = 0.31$ to 0.52), and overall rated quality of life ($r = -0.25$ to -0.27). Groups who differed on feelings about the decision (negative, mixed, or positive) also differed on rated regret: ANOVA F statistic (df 2,190) = 31.1, $p < .001$. Regret was greater among those who changed their decision than among those who did not. T-test (df 175) = 16.11, $p < .001$

Test-retest reliability not known

Clinical Applications Using this Tool

Psychometric study [1] reports responses from 4 different samples of patients: menopausal women considering hormone replacement therapy; men considering prostate cancer treatment; women considering breast cancer treatment; women considering breast cancer adjuvant treatment. Another study used it with breast cancer surgery patients [2]. It is currently being used with older women deciding about osteoporosis treatment [3].

Alternate Formats

All versions of the Regret Scale have used the same variable labels.

The introductory statement can be modified to suite the topic of the decision.

i.e. Please reflect on the first decision that you made about [*hormone therapy / breast cancer surgery, etc*] after talking with your [*family physician / surgeon, etc.*]. Please show how strongly you agree or disagree with these statements by circling a number from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) which best fits your views about your decision.

Availability

These tools are available in other languages as [listed here](#). They are protected by copyright but are freely available for you to use, provided you cite the reference in any questionnaires or publications. We would appreciate receiving notification of your intention to use the Decision Regret Scale and a copy of any documents developed using this tool.

For further information or to send us documents you develop, please e-mail the Ottawa Health Decision Centre (ohdec@ohri.ca).

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References

1. Brehaut JC, O'Connor AM, Wood TJ, Hack TF, Siminoff L, Gordon E, Feldman-Stewart D. Validation of a decision regret scale. *Medical Decision Making* 2003; **23(4)**: 281-92
Keywords: decision regret/decision regret scale/regret
2. Goel V, Sawka C, Thiel E, Gort E, O'Connor AM. Randomized trial of a patient decision aid for choice of surgical treatment for breast cancer. *Medical Decision Making* 2001; **21**: 1-6.
Keywords: breast cancer surgery/decision aid/decision regret/decisional conflict/knowledge
3. Cranney A, Tugwell P, O'Connor AM, Wells G, Adachi MD, Jolly E, et al. A randomized controlled trial evaluating the impact of a decision aid for individuals with osteoporosis. (In progress).