

## The ALS Functional Rating Scale

### 1. Speech

- 4 Normal speech processes.
- 3 Detectable speech disturbance.
- 2 Intelligible with repeating.
- 1 Speech combined with nonvocal communication.
- 0 Loss of useful speech.

### 2. Salivation

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Slight but definite excess of saliva in mouth; may have nighttime drooling.
- 2 Moderately excessive saliva; may have minimal drooling.
- 1 Marked excess of saliva with some drooling.
- 0 Marked drooling; requires constant tissue or handkerchief.

### 3. Swallowing

- 4 Normal eating habits.
- 3 Early eating problems—occasional choking.
- 2 Dietary consistency changes.
- 1 Needs supplemental tube feeding.
- 0 NPO (exclusively parenteral or enteral feeding).

### 4. Handwriting

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Slow or sloppy: all words are legible.
- 2 Not all words are legible.
- 1 Able to grip pen but unable to write.
- 0 Unable to grip pen.

### 5a. Cutting food and handling utensils (no gastrostomy)

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Somewhat slow and clumsy, but no help needed.
- 2 Can cut most foods, although clumsy and slow; some help needed.
- 1 Food must be cut by someone, but can still feed slowly.
- 0 Needs to be fed.

### 5b. Cutting food and handling utensils (patients with gastrostomy)

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Clumsy but able to perform all manipulations independently.
- 2 Some help needed with closures and fasteners.
- 1 Provides minimal assistance to caregiver.
- 0 Unable to perform any aspect of task.

### 6. Dressing and hygiene.

- 4 Normal function.
- 3 Independent and complete self-care with effort or decreased efficiency.
- 2 Intermittent assistance or substitute methods.
- 1 Needs attendant for self-care.
- 0 Total dependence.

### 7. Turning in bed and adjusting bed clothes

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Somewhat slow and clumsy, but no help needed.
- 2 Can turn alone or adjust sheets, but with great difficulty.
- 1 Can initiate, but not turn or adjust sheets alone.
- 0 Helpless.

### 8. Walking

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Early ambulation difficulties.
- 2 Walks with assistance.
- 1 Nonambulatory functional movement only.
- 0 No purposeful leg movement.

### 9. Climbing stairs

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Slow.
- 2 Mild unsteadiness or fatigue.
- 1 Needs assistance.
- 0 Cannot do.

### 10. Breathing

- 4 Normal.
- 3 Shortness of breath with minimal exertion (e.g. walking, talking).
- 2 Shortness of breath at rest.
- 1 Intermittent (e.g. nocturnal) ventilatory assistance.
- 0 Ventilator dependent.

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