

ARMT Short Form

Assessment of Readiness for Mobility Transition (ARMT)

A Tool for Mobility Transition Counseling (MTC)

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The ARMT is a clinical tool to assess emotional and attitudinal readiness to cope effectively with a significant mobility related transition, such as retirement from driving. The full 24-item version of the scale is recommended for most users and may be downloaded from <http://www.umsl.edu/mtci/>. The ARMT is intended for face-to-face administration in context a live mobility planning and/or counseling intervention.

Meuser, T.M., Berg-Weger, M., Chibnall, J.T., Harmon, A.C., & Stowe, J.N. (2011 online; 2013 print). Assessment of readiness for mobility transition

(ARMT): A tool for mobility transition counseling with older adults. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 32(4), 484-507.

ARMT Short Form:

The full version may be cumbersome for very brief or over-the-phone interventions. This 8-item short form captures the core meanings of the full ARMT total score (.90 correlation). While based on the original validation datasets (n=297;135), this short form has not been validated separately and should be used only when full scale administration is not realistic. This version of the ARMT-SF is intended for oral administration.

Read the following to the interviewee/respondent:

"Consider what would happen if you could not get yourself to valued destinations and activities independently. Maybe this is occurring already in your life; maybe it could happen in the future. I will read a series of statements to you. Consider if you agree or disagree and how strongly.

You will respond on a five point scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. You would respond 4 if you generally agree, but not strongly so. Likewise, you would respond 2 if you generally disagree, but not strongly so. You would respond 3 if you

agree and disagree with the statement. Do you have any questions? Then let's get started."

ARMT-SF

1. I am a burden if I ask others for help with transportation.
2. It is devastating for older people to have someone take away their car keys.
3. I feel depressed at the thought of being limited in my mobility.
4. There is no way to plan for loss of mobility in aging.
5. My future independence hinges on my ability to get myself around.
6. I have not thought much about my future mobility before today.
7. I've seen others become frail and immobile in older age, and I am determined to avoid this fate at whatever cost.
8. It is not easy for me to ask for help with transportation when I need it.

Sum of Responses (Total Score) =>28 High Risk

INTERPRETATION:

A total score of 29 or more is characterized by significant felt anxiety, worry about a loss of personal independence, and concern about becoming a burden on others.

Pessimistic, inflexible thinking may also be part of this profile. High scorers may resist depending on others for transportation and so delay making mobility-related plans until a crisis ensues. In these ways, a high total score suggests that the respondent may not be fully ready (i.e., from an emotional and attitudinal perspective) to adapt successfully to a new mobility loss/change.

High scorers can still plan for their present and future mobility needs, but they will likely need extra 1:1 guidance and support. High scorers may benefit from counseling to discuss their beliefs in light of their present functional status and future mobility needs/goals. Often, strong negative views about non-driving mobility will need to be challenged in this process. Whereas low scorers may come to the mobility planning encounter with attitudes consistent with learning new mobility options, high scorers will need to be eased into a planning process of their own choosing. An immediate presentation of local bus and taxi options, for example, will likely be met with resistance from a high scorer. Their "readiness" must first be understood and cultivated to ensure eventual, successful planning.

CLIENT/PATIENT HANDOUTS

Assessment of Readiness for Mobility Transition (ARMT) Scale

The ARMT is a 24-item (8-item short form) measure of emotional and attitudinal readiness (preparedness) to manage an age-related transition (change) in mobility status, such as the transition from driving to non-driving mobility.

ARMT items are responded to on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree). Four scores may be derived: Total Score (TS), Subscale 1 (Anticipatory Anxiety), Subscale 2 (Perceived Burden), Subscale 3 (Avoidance), & Subscale 4 (Adverse Situation). Item responses are summed and mean scores are calculated. All scores vary from 1-5 points.

The following respondent (client, patient) handouts are based on Total Score findings from three score ranges:

- RED - High Risk / Low Readiness (ARMT TS > 3.57; > 28 on Short Form)
- YELLOW - Average Risk / Mixed Readiness (ARMT TS 2.29 to 3.57; 19- 28 SF)
- GREEN - Low Risk / High Readiness (ARMT TS < 2.29; 8 – 18 SF)

Important roles of the ARMT are to (1) promote increased self-awareness concerning age-related mobility change and (2) encourage discussion of present circumstances and potential future needs. These handouts were designed with these two aims in mind. Each handout provides a general description of the emotional and attitudinal basis for the obtained score, and suggests issues and questions for discussion with the mobility specialist, social service professional, and/or peer counselor.

Primary Reference:

Meuser, T.M., Berg-Weger, M., Chibnall, J.T., Harmon, A.C., & Stowe, J.N. (2011 online; 2013 print). Assessment of readiness for mobility transition (ARMT): A tool for mobility transition counseling with older adults. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 32(4), 484-507. doi: 10.1177/0733464811425914.

Questions/comments about these handouts may be addressed to Tom Meuser, PhD, University of New England (tmeuser@une.edu), or Marla Berg-Weger, PhD, Saint Louis University (bergwm@slu.edu).

Assessment of Readiness for Mobility Transition (ARMT)

Total Mean Score of 3.58+ (> 28 on Short Form) / LOW READINESS

Why was I asked to complete this questionnaire?

The ARMT examines age-related changes in mobility from the perspective of personal feelings and attitudes. You responded to a series of statements, indicating your level of agreement for each. Your total score tells the professional or peer counselor about your beliefs. Your score is in the "at risk" range, and your responses suggest that you might struggle to adapt should you experience a sudden change in mobility.

What does my total score on the ARMT say about me?

Your score indicates that you are a proud, independent, self-reliant person. You appreciate doing things for yourself and being in a position to help others. You cope with age-related declines in your health or function by maintaining a positive attitude and focusing on what you still do well. While you are open to receiving help from others at times, you prefer solutions that allow you to remain in control and focused on your personal priorities. When faced with a mobility transition, such as a need to cut back on driving, you prefer a go-slow, wait-and-see approach. You worry about what your life will be like if you are less mobile than today, and you want to do all that you can to avoid negative outcomes for yourself and your family. Having to rely more on others and burden them with your needs is not an appealing prospect. The thought of declining health and function is anxiety-provoking and you would rather not think about it.

Questions for Consideration & Discussion

- What concerns you most about growing older? What would you avoid if you could?
- What would happen if your present independence changed and you had to rely more on others? How would you feel about yourself?
- Is it possible to remain largely independent and in control, yet also rely on others to live a full, meaningful life? How might this look?
- Does retirement from driving mean an end to quality living? Might it be possible to stop driving and still go to the places and activities you value?

Assessment of Readiness for Mobility Transition (ARMT)

Total Mean Score of 2.29 -3.57 (19-28 SF) / MIXED READINESS

Why was I asked to complete this questionnaire?

The ARMT examines age-related changes in mobility from the perspective of personal feelings and attitudes. You responded to a series of statements, indicating your level of agreement for each. Your total score tells the professional or peer counselor about your

beliefs. Your score suggests you are likely to have some mixed emotions and thoughts should you experience a sudden change in your mobility status.

What does my total score on the ARMT say about me?

Your score indicates that you are thoughtful, considerate, and realistic. You strive to remain as active and engaged as you can, but you also understand that advancing age will present some challenges in time. The thought of facing permanent deficits and dependence on others does not appeal to you, however, and you much prefer to chart a safe and comfortable course on your aging journey. You worry that some age-related adjustments may impact negatively on your quality of life, for example. What you know about aging as an abstract concept also differs from your responses on a feeling level; it is one thing to talk about it and quite another to live it. You have normal worries about it. When faced a mobility transition, such as a need to cut back on driving, you are open to talking about the issues and exploring your options. Remaining in control is important to you, and so you are likely to respond to external pressure with caution and even skepticism. This does not mean that you are inflexible or unreasonable. You know that age-related changes in health and function are likely, and so it is prudent to plan ahead. You simply want to weigh your options and consider solutions that maximize your function and minimize any burden on others. The bottom line is that you want to maintain a good quality of life.

Questions for Consideration & Discussion

- What aspects of advancing aging may present the biggest challenges for you?
- Are there outcomes that you wish to avoid if you can?
- Your ability to get yourself from place to place is important. What aspects of your mobility (modes of transit, valued destinations, activities) do you most want to maintain for as long as possible?
- Does retirement from driving mean an end to quality living? Might it be possible to stop driving and still go to the places you value?
- How might this look?

Assessment of Readiness for Mobility Transition (ARMT)

Total Mean Score of 1-2.28 (8 – 18 Short Form) / HIGH READINESS

Why was I asked to complete this questionnaire?

The ARMT examines age-related changes in mobility from the perspective of personal feelings and attitudes. You responded to a series of statements, indicating your level of agreement for each. Your total score tells the professional or peer counselor about your beliefs. Your score suggests that you are well-equipped to manage a sudden change in your mobility status successfully.

What does my total score on the ARMT say about me?

Your score indicates that you are confident, adaptable and open to new experiences. You understand that aging is a process that requires gradual adaptation over time. You ascribe to a "cup half full" philosophy and appreciate what your life offers in the present, without bemoaning losses now or in the future. This is not to say that you ignore the impact of aging. On the contrary, you recognize that planning for the future is your best opportunity to remain active, mobile and engaged in life. Aging doesn't frighten you so long as you can make proactive decisions along the way. When faced a mobility transition, such as a need to cut back on driving, you prefer to face the issue head on and learn your options. You welcome opportunities to consult with persons you trust, including family members and professionals, and you appreciate their observations and input. You are open to accepting help from others and do not view this as causing unnecessary burden. If the car is not a realistic mode of transit for you, then you will find others. Your quality of life is not dependent on one form of mobility or another. You embrace a flexible view of independence.

Questions for Consideration & Discussion

- What does positive mobility mean to you? How does the ability to travel, at will, from place to place, contribute to your quality of life?
- As you think about your future aging experience, what aspects of your mobility (modes of transit, valued destinations, activities) are important to preserve?
- Conversely, what can you live without?
- What mobility options make the most sense for you where you live now?

Drivers 65 Plus: Self-Rating Form

Scoring: There are 5 steps.

INSTRUCTIONS:

For each of the following 15 questions, check the symbol of the one answer that best describes you.

Always or Almost Always | Sometimes | Never or Almost Never

1. I signal and check to the rear when I change lanes.
2. I wear a seat belt
3. I try to stay informed on changes in driving and highway laws and techniques
4. Intersections bother me because there is so much to watch from all directions
5. I find it difficult to decide when to merge with traffic on a busy interstate highway

6. I think I am slower than I used to be in reacting to dangerous driving situations.
7. When I am really upset, it affects my driving
8. My thoughts wander when I drive
9. Traffic situations make me angry
10. I get regular eye exams to keep my vision at its sharpest
11. I check with my doctor or pharmacist about how the medications I take affect my driving ability. If you do not take any medication, skip this question).
12. I try to stay informed of current information about health and wellness habits
13. My children, other family members or friends have expressed concern about my driving ability.
14. How many traffic tickets, warnings, or "discussions" with law enforcement officers have you had in the past two years?
15. How many collisions (major or minor) have you had during the past two years?

Self Scoring:

Count the number of checkmarks in the squares and record the total in the square below. Follow the same procedure for the triangles and circles. These are your Check Mark Totals. For score and interpretation, see next page.

- Step 1: Write the Check Mark Total recorded in the square on the previous page in the square to the right. X5=
- Step 2: Write the Check Mark Total recorded in the triangle on the previous page in the triangle to the right. X3=
- Step 3: Multiply the number in the square by 5.
- Step 4: Multiply the number in the triangle by 3.
- Step 5: Add the results of Steps 3 and 4.

Interpretation of Score:

The lower the score, the safer you are as a driver. The higher the score, the more danger you are to yourself and others. No matter what your score, look at the Suggestions for Improvement section for each area in which you checked a square or triangle. These are the areas in which you can improve the most.

Score Meaning

- 0 to 15. GO! You are aware of what is important to safe driving and are practicing what you know. See the Suggestions for Improvement in the following section of this booklet, to learn how to become an even safer driver.
- 16 to 34. CAUTION! You are engaging in some practices that need improvement to ensure safety. Look to the Suggestions for Improvement section to see how you might enhance your driving.

- 35 and over. STOP! You are engaging in too many unsafe driving practices, and might pose a hazard to yourself and others. Examine the areas where you checked squares or triangles. Read the Suggestions for Improvement section for ways to correct these problem areas.

These scores are based on what drivers 65 and over have told us about driving practices and habits. Your score is based on your answers to a limited number of important questions. For a complete evaluation of your driving ability, many more questions would be required, along with medical, physical, and licensing examinations. Nevertheless, your answers and score give some indication of how well you are doing and how you can become a safer driver. In general, a checked square for an item reflects an unsafe practice or situation that should be changed immediately. A checked triangle means a practice or situation that is unsafe, or on its way to becoming unsafe, if nothing is done to improve it. Checking circles is a sign that you are doing what you should to be (and remain) a safe driver. Most of the square and triangle answers represent practices or situations that can be improved by most drivers. The following section contains suggestions for improvement, divided into each of the 15 areas. You should focus on those areas for which you checked squares or triangles.