

MUSCLE HEALTH

MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT
IN PRIMARY CARE

HOW-TO GUIDE TO ASK AND ASSESS





**IF A PATIENT PRESENTS WITH ≥ 1 RISK
FACTOR FOR POOR MUSCLE HEALTH**

ASK AND/OR ASSESS

according to available resources and/or patient preferences

ASK

INCREASED LIKELIHOOD OF POOR MUSCLE HEALTH*

SARC-F (Strength, Assistance in walking, Rise from a chair, Climb stairs, and Falls) questionnaire: Score ≥ 2

ASSESS

LOW MUSCLE STRENGTH AND/OR PHYSICAL FUNCTION^

ASSESS AT LEAST ONE:

- **Handgrip strength:** <37 kg (men), <23 kg (women)
 - **5 times sit-to-stand:** ≥ 11 seconds
- **3-metre TUG (Timed Up and Go):** ≥ 10 seconds

ASK → SARC-F^{1,2}

RATE DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Questions 1-4

- 0 = no difficulty
1 = some difficulty
2 = very difficult

Questions 5

- 0 = no falls
1 = 1-3 falls
2 = ≥4 falls



1

STRENGTH

Lifting/carrying a
4.5 kg weight



2

ASSISTANCE

Walking across a room



3

RISING

Transferring from a
chair or bed



4

CLIMBING

Climbing 10 steps



5

FALLS

How many falls in the
last year?

SCORE ≥2*

INCREASED LIKELIHOOD
OF POOR MUSCLE HEALTH

Proceed to **ASSESS** or
MANAGE as per the algorithm

SCORE <2

Consider **ASSESS** based on
clinical judgement or proceed to
PREVENT as per the algorithm

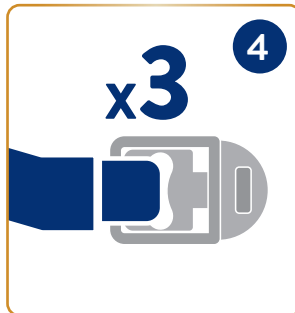
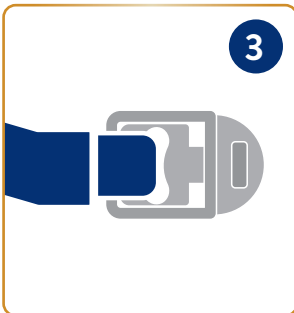
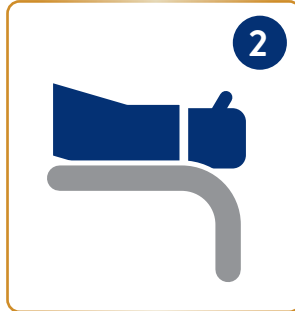
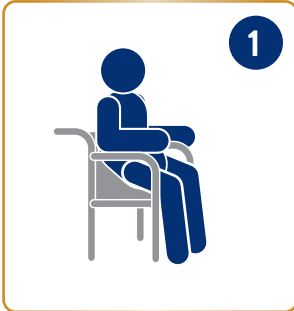
ASSESS → Handgrip Strength³

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Handgrip dynamometer
- Chair with back rest and fixed arms



PROCEDURE:



Step 1: Position the patient

Sit the patient comfortably in a chair.

Step 2: Instruct patient

Patient should rest their forearms on the arms of the chair with their wrist just over the end, thumb facing upwards.

Step 3: How to measure

Start with the right hand. Encourage the patient to squeeze as hard as they can for 3 seconds and record the grip strength and round to the nearest kilogram.

Step 4: Repeat

Repeat the measurement for the left hand and alternate sides to get 3 readings for each hand and select the highest score.

MEN: <37KG
WOMEN: <23KG[^]

LOW MUSCLE STRENGTH
Proceed to **MANAGE** as per the algorithm

MEN: >37KG
WOMEN: >23KG

Proceed to **PREVENT** as per the algorithm

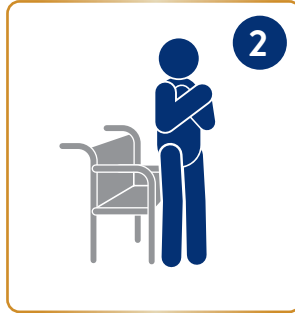
ASSESS → 5 Times Sit-to-Stand⁴

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Stopwatch
- Chair with back rest



PROCEDURE:



Step 1: Position the patient

Ensure the patient is seated with feet flat on the floor and arms crossed over their chest.

Step 2: Instruct patient

Ask the patient to stand up and sit down five times as quickly as possible without using their arms.

Step 3: How to measure

Say “Go” then start the timer as the patient begins to stand up and stop the timer when they stand up fully for the fifth time and record the total time taken.

≥ 11 SECONDS[^]

LOW MUSCLE STRENGTH
& FUNCTION

Proceed to **MANAGE** as per
the algorithm

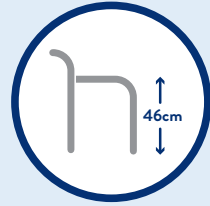
<11 SECONDS

Proceed to **PREVENT** as per
the algorithm

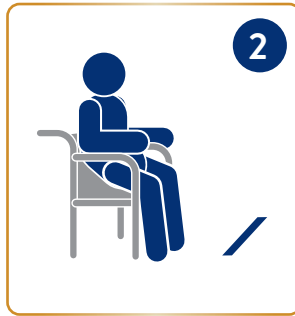
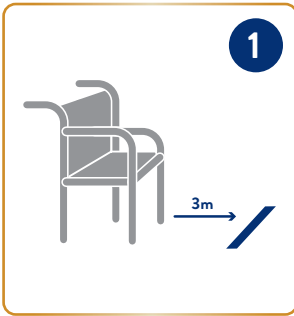
ASSESS → 3-Metre Timed Up and Go⁵

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Standard height chair (seat height ~46 cm)
- Measuring tape to mark 3 metres from the chair
- A traffic cone or line to mark 3-metres
- Stopwatch



PROCEDURE:



Step 1: Set-up

Place the chair against a wall to prevent it from moving. Mark a line on the floor 3 metres away from the chair.

Step 2: Position the patient

Patient should sit on the chair with their back against the chair, arms resting on the arm rests, and any walking aid at hand.



Step 3: Instruct the patient

Say "On the word 'go,' stand up, walk at a comfortable and safe pace to the line on the floor, turn around, walk back to the chair, and sit down again."

Step 4: How to measure:

Start timing when you say "Go" and stop timing when the patient sits back down and record the time taken in seconds.

≥ 10 SECONDS[^]

LOW MUSCLE FUNCTION

Proceed to **MANAGE** as per the algorithm

<10 SECONDS

Proceed to **PREVENT** as per the algorithm

For more information....



ASK:
SARC-F



ASSESS:
Handgrip Strength



ASSESS:
5 Times Sit-to-Stand



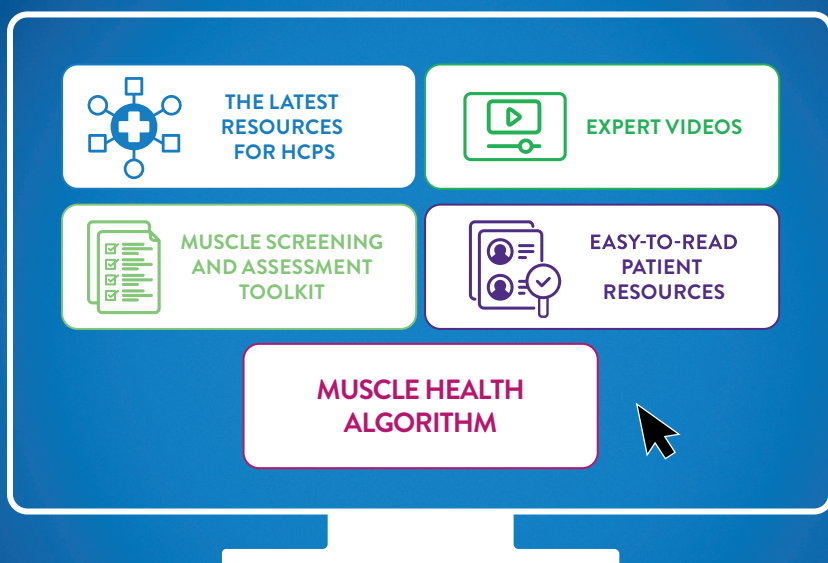
ASSESS:
3-metre TUG



MUSCLE MATTERS

EDUCATION AND TOOLS PORTAL

A suite of digital educational resources and tools for you and your patients to help maintain muscle health.



SCAN THE QR CODE to access the
Muscle Matters Education and Tools Portal.

*Cut-off for SARC-F is based on evidence of highest sensitivity for early detection of increased likelihood of poor muscle health.

^Cut-offs for low muscle strength and function represent scores below the 20th to 25th percentile of normative ranges based on data from adults aged 60 years and older.

References: 1. Malmstrom TK, et al. *JAMDA*. 2013;14:531-532. 2. Osman M, et al. *Eur Geriatr Med*. 2023;14:1327-1331. 3. Roberts HC, et al. *Age and Ageing*. 2011;40: 423-429. 4. Dodds RM, et al. *JCSM*. 2021;12:308-318. 5. Podsiadlo D, et al. *JAGS*. 1991;39:142-148. ©Registered trademark of the Abbott Group of Companies. Abbott Australasia Pty Ltd, 299 Lane Cove Road, Macquarie Park NSW 2113. Customer Service 1800 225 311. www.abbottnutrition.com.au. May 25. ANZ.2025.61949.ENS.1