

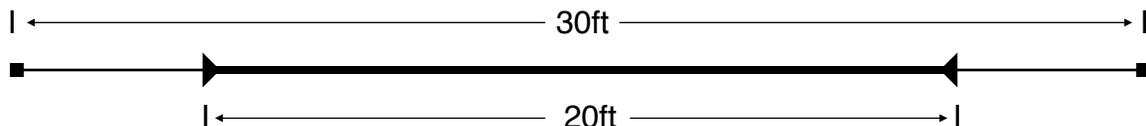
How To Assess Gait Speed?

Tools Required:

- Stopwatch.
- 30 foot length hallway or open space.
- Patient.

Here are the steps to measure gait speed:

1. On a level floor mark with tape the two ends of a 30ft distance.
2. On the floor mark 5 feet in from both ends. These two marks will then be 20 feet apart.
3. Have the patient stand at one end of the measured distance.
4. Advise them that this is a measured test of their gait speed and that you will be measuring their “preferred” or usual gait speed as they walk from the start line to the finish line 30 feet away.
5. Have them start walking to the other end of the measured 30 feet. As soon as the first foot crosses the marker on the floor at the first 5 foot marker start timing. Stop timing when the last foot clears the 5 foot marker at the other end.
6. Calculate the distance divided by the time as their preferred gait speed. So, if someone walks the 20ft in 5 seconds their preferred gait speed is 4ft/sec.



Test Options

- Assess one's gait speed while they carry a glass of water or are doing a cognitive task like counting by 7's.
- Ask them to walk as fast as they can.

Make sure to document if ambulatory aides were used.

Normative Data:

With seniors:

- Gait speeds of >4.3ft/s were found in those who were extremely fit.
- Gait speeds of >3.3ft/s were found in a healthy population, with lower risk of health events and better survival.
- Gait speeds of <3.4ft/s were found to be consistent with those at risk for cognitive decline within 5 years.
- Gait speeds of <3.3ft/s were found to be consistent with those at risk for death or hospitalization within 1 year.
- Gait speeds of <2.0ft/s were found to be consistent with those with functional or cognitive decline, institutionalization, and mortality.

Abellan van Kan. Gait Speed as Usual Pace Predictor of Adverse Outcomes in Community-Dwelling Older People an International Academy on Nutrition and Aging (ANA Task Force) J. Nutr, Heath Aging. 2009; 13 (10): 881-889.

With seniors, a gait speed of less than 3.28ft/sec reflected an individual who typically needed an intervention to reduce their risk of a fall.

Montero-Odasso. Gait Velocity as a Single Predictor of Adverse Events in Healthy Seniors Aged 75 Years and Older. J. Gerontol A. Bill. Sci. Med. Sci. 2005; 60 (10): 1304-1309.

With seniors the normal range of gait speed is between 3.0 to 4.6ft/sec. Also:

- Gait speeds of 1.97ft/sec or less were indicative of individuals who were likely dependent in ADLs and more likely to be hospitalized.
- Gait speeds of 3.28ft/sec or greater were indicative of individuals who were more likely to be independent in ADLs and less likely to be hospitalized.

Studenski. Physical Performance Measures in the Clinical Setting. J. of the American Geriatric Soc. 2003; 51(3): 314-322.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact North 49 at 306-343-7776.