

Suppl. 1: Head and Neck Cancer Functional Integrity Scale (HNC-FIT Scale)

The Head and Neck Cancer Functional Integrity Scale (HNC-FIT Scale) is completed by the physician during the patient interview at regular follow-up visits and serves for internal quality control. It needs normally less than 2 minutes to fill in the questionnaire form. The HNC-FIT Scale covers the functional domains nutrition, respiration, speech, pain, mood, and neck and shoulder mobility. Functional integrity is scaled from 0 to 4, with 0 meaning complete loss of normal function and 4 meaning functional integrity as it was before the disease began.

Functional domain	Integrity Grade				
	0	1	2	3	4
Nutrition	Unable to swallow; only via gastrostomy tube	Gastrostomy tube needed, some oral feeding possible	No gastrostomy tube, oral diet, but only liquid/soft food	No gastrostomy tube, diet slightly restricted	normal
Respiration	Tracheostoma, needs blocked cannula	Tracheostoma, speech cannula/no cannula	No tracheostoma, breathing difficulties at rest	No tracheostoma, breathing difficulties only on exertion	normal
Speech	Not possible, without phonation	Difficult to understand, no phone calls	Telephoning possible	Easy to understand, but pronunciation/voice changed	normal
Pain	Pain despite opiate therapy	Controlled with opiates	Regularly needs non-opioid analgesics	Needs analgesics from time to time	normal
Mood	Suicidal thoughts	Very depressed despite antidepressants	With antidepressants overall normal mood	Occasionally depressed, no antidepressants needed	normal
Neck & shoulder mobility¹⁾	Stiff neck and/or shoulder, hardly any movement possible	Can hair hardly comb, looking backwards in car not possible	Combing with problems, looking backwards in car difficult	Combing and looking backwards in car slightly restricted	normal

1) The worse result of neck mobility and shoulder mobility is counted