

Epworth Sleepiness Scale: Clinician Report

Patient: Alex Smith
Assessment date: 2026-05-18

TOTAL SCORE

21 / 24

Score band: Severe EDS (16–24)

MANDATORY CLINICIAN REVIEW REQUIRED

- Driving safety threshold met: Austroads / clinical service driving-safety protocol applies. Cannot be suppressed.

CUTPOINT CROSSED

Threshold	Label
>= 10	Alternative cut-point used by some sleep centres
>= 11	Primary cut-point for clinically significant excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS)

SAFETY ALERT

[MANDATORY REVIEW] Driving safety alert. The patient endorsed a high likelihood of dozing while stopped in traffic (item 8). This represents a significant driving safety concern that must be addressed before this report is finalised. Required actions: (1) explicit discussion with the patient regarding fitness to drive; (2) documentation in accordance with Austroads Medical Standards for Licensing; (3) consideration of provisional advice to refrain from driving pending sleep medicine evaluation, particularly if total score is also in the moderate or severe range.

SCORE STATEMENT

The patient completed the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS) on 2026-05-18, obtaining a total score of 21/24, placing in the Severe EDS range (16–24).

SYMPTOM PROFILE

Sleepiness profile. Dozing was endorsed across 8 of 8 daily situations. The pattern is generalised severe: elevated dozing propensity across both passive and active situations, indicating pervasive excessive daytime sleepiness. Active-situation dozing was endorsed in both conversation and traffic contexts, which is clinically distinct from passive-only dozing.

RECOMMENDATION

[MANDATORY REVIEW] Severe-range scores (ESS 16 to 24) with elevated dozing propensity across both passive and active situations have been described in the published literature as consistent with severe excessive daytime sleepiness requiring expedited sleep-medicine evaluation (Johns, 2000). Differential considerations include severe obstructive sleep apnoea, narcolepsy with cataplexy, idiopathic hypersomnia, severely insufficient sleep, and medication or substance contributors. **At this severity, driving and the operation of hazardous machinery are governed by Austroads Medical Standards for Licensing; provisional advice to refrain from driving until specialist evaluation is required, with contemporaneous documentation.** Expedited specialist referral and clear documentation are described as required before report finalisation. *These notes summarise the published evidence base for this presentation pattern and are intended for clinician consideration. They do not constitute individual treatment recommendations and may not apply to every person; clinical judgement and knowledge of the full clinical picture take precedence.*

SCALE INFORMATION

Scale information. The ESS is an 8-item self-report measure of the chance of dozing in everyday situations. Score range 0 to 24. Cutoff ≥ 10 (alternative ≥ 11) indicates clinically significant excessive daytime sleepiness; ≥ 16 indicates severe sleepiness. Validated against multiple sleep latency testing (Johns, 1991; Johns, 1992). Widely used in sleep medicine, with sensitivity and specificity dependent on referral context. The instrument is a subjective measure of sleep propensity and does not differentiate aetiology; diagnosis of sleep disorder requires clinical and laboratory assessment.

ITEM RESPONSES

Rating scale: **0** = Would never doze **1** = Slight chance of dozing **2** = Moderate chance of dozing **3** = High chance of dozing

#	Description	Response	Score
1	Sitting and reading	High chance of dozing	3
2	Watching TV	High chance of dozing	3
3	Sitting inactive in a public place (e.g. a theatre or a meeting)	High chance of dozing	3
4	As a passenger in a car for an hour without a break	High chance of dozing	3
5	Lying down to rest in the afternoon when circumstances permit	Moderate chance of dozing	2
6	Sitting and talking to someone	Moderate chance of dozing	2
7	Sitting quietly after a lunch without alcohol	Moderate chance of dozing	2
8 *	In a car, while stopped for a few minutes in the traffic	High chance of dozing	3