

Spinal Cord Independence Measure
Version III (SCIM-III): Standardized Procedures for
Administration and Scoring by Interview

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Introduction

The **Spinal Cord Independence Measure Version III (SCIM-III): Interview** is designed for individuals with SCI and assesses performance in activities of daily living and mobility. It is frequently used in both clinical practice and clinical trial settings.

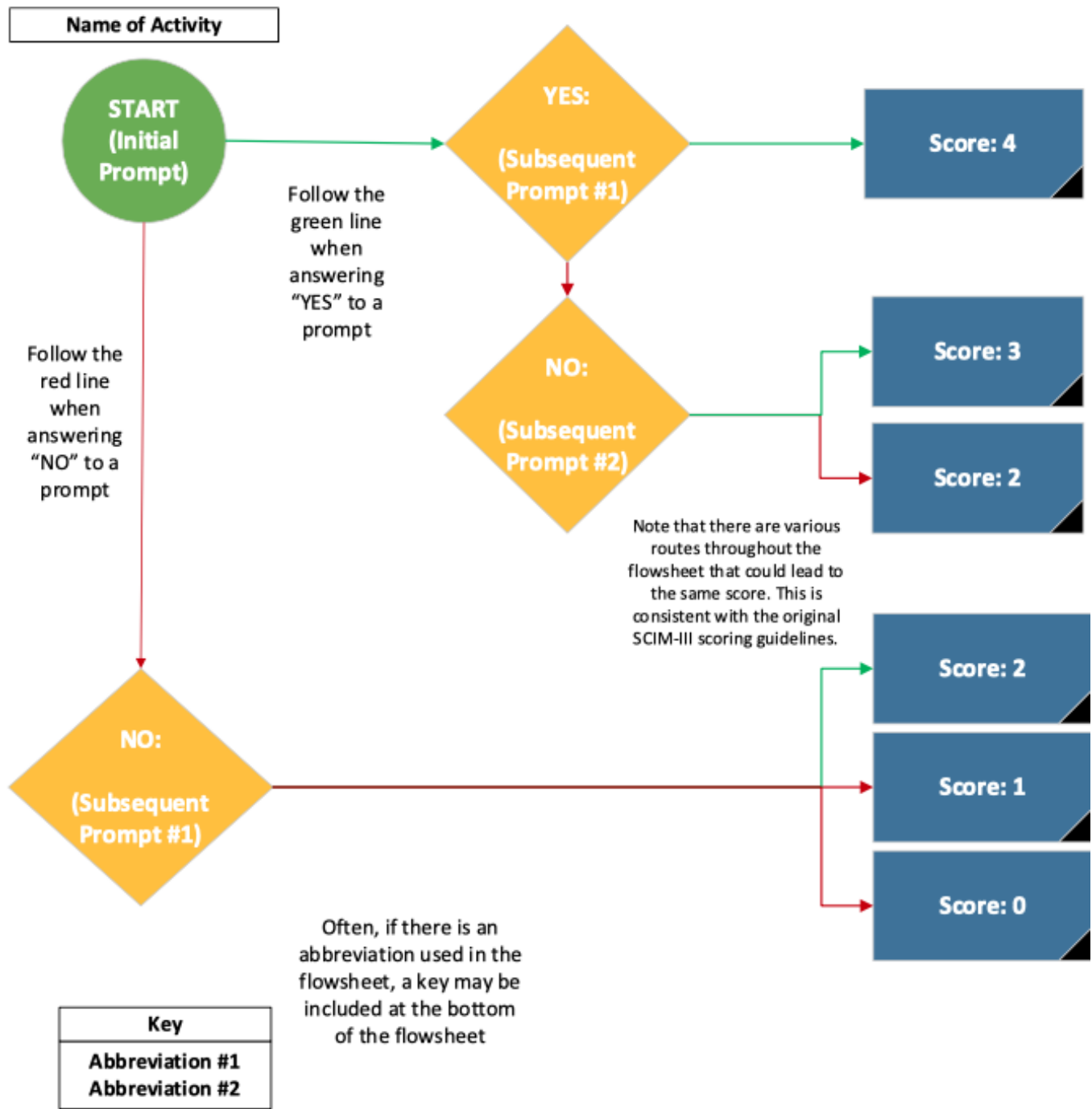
Because the SCIM-III form is not accompanied by a manual that provides guidelines for standardization in administration and scoring, there is risk that variation in procedures for administration and scoring across trials may limit opportunity for comparison of outcomes or harmonization of data. As a way to improve standardization and scoring of the SCIM-III, the Center for Outcomes and Measurements at Thomas Jefferson University used a Modified Delphi Survey and engaged experts in SCI to develop clear procedural guidelines for administration and scoring the SCIM-III in an interview format. The iterative Modified Delphi Survey methodology did not alter any SCIM-III item or scoring criteria. Rather it focused entirely on providing clarity and standardized instructions for administering and scoring SCIM-III items, with the goal to provide the field with a resource for when the SCIM-III is used.

Interview flowsheets were created for the 4 original subscales of the SCIM-III: self-care (6 items), respiration and sphincter management (4 items), mobility (room and toilet) (3 items), and mobility (indoors and outdoors, on even surfaces) (6 items). A total score out of 60 can be obtained.

General Instructions

1. Administration by interview should take approximately 30-45 minutes.
2. The administrator will follow the prompts on the interview flowsheets (see Figure 1 on page 5):
 - a. First, administrators will refer to the **Green Circle** for prompt #1 of that particular test item.
 - b. Depending on the answer of the participant, administrators will follow either a green arrow (for an answer of “Yes”) or a red arrow (for an answer of “No”) to reach a **Yellow Diamond** which will provide the next prompt. This iteration may repeat depending on whether the test item requires multiple prompts to reach a particular score.
 - c. Scores are found in the **Blue Rectangles** on the flowsheets.
 - i. The SCIM-Spinal Cord Independence Measure Version III September 14, 2002 score sheet should be utilized to document scores. It can be obtained here by selecting Instrument Details. <https://www.sralab.org/rehabilitation-measures/spinal-cord-independence-measure>
 - ii. **Note:** The original SCIM-III does not use a consistent score scale for each item. Therefore, the highest score for one item might be a 2, but for another item, the highest score might be an 8. There may be multiple routes through the flowsheets that will result in the same score.
3. Please note that not every case/scenario may be captured in these flowsheets. For example, for “bathing” items (self-care), sponge bathing is not included in the original SCIM-III form. Despite being an appropriate consideration for persons with SCI, some conditions and situations were not represented in the interview flowsheets in order to adhere to the original SCIM-III guidelines.
4. To stay as true to the original SCIM-III , scoring, measurements (i.e., residual urine values), and core tasks were not altered.
5. Some measurements (especially for the Respiratory and Sphincter Management items) were preset by the original SCIM-III (i.e. RUV values/units). In order to adhere to the original SCIM-III, these are consistent with the original form.

Figure 1. Example Flowsheet



Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Term
SCIM-III	Spinal Cord Independence Measure Version 3.0
SCI	Spinal cord injury
OT	Occupational therapist
PT	Physical therapist
UB	Upper body
LB	Lower body
DME	Durable medical equipment
AD	Adaptive devices
TT	Tracheal tube/tracheostomy tube
IAV	Intermittent assisted ventilation
PEEP	Positive end-expiratory pressure
RUV	Residual urine volume
BiPAP	Bilevel positive airway pressure

Term	Definition	Examples/Notes
Adaptive Devices (AD)	Devices that help someone perform daily activities. These can be off-the-shelf or tailor made for the participant. Ideally, it is what the participant typically uses.	Examples may include but are not limited to: U-cuff, long-handled sponge, splint, grab bars, built-up handles, dressing stick
Assistance	Any time the participant is provided with physical help from another person to perform either part of or an entire task, which includes contact guard assistance for safety. Supervision is not considered assistance.	
Partial Assistance	Participant is provided with physical help from another person to perform part of the task, which includes contact guard assistance for safety.	
Total Assistance	Participant is provided with physical help from another person to perform the entire task	

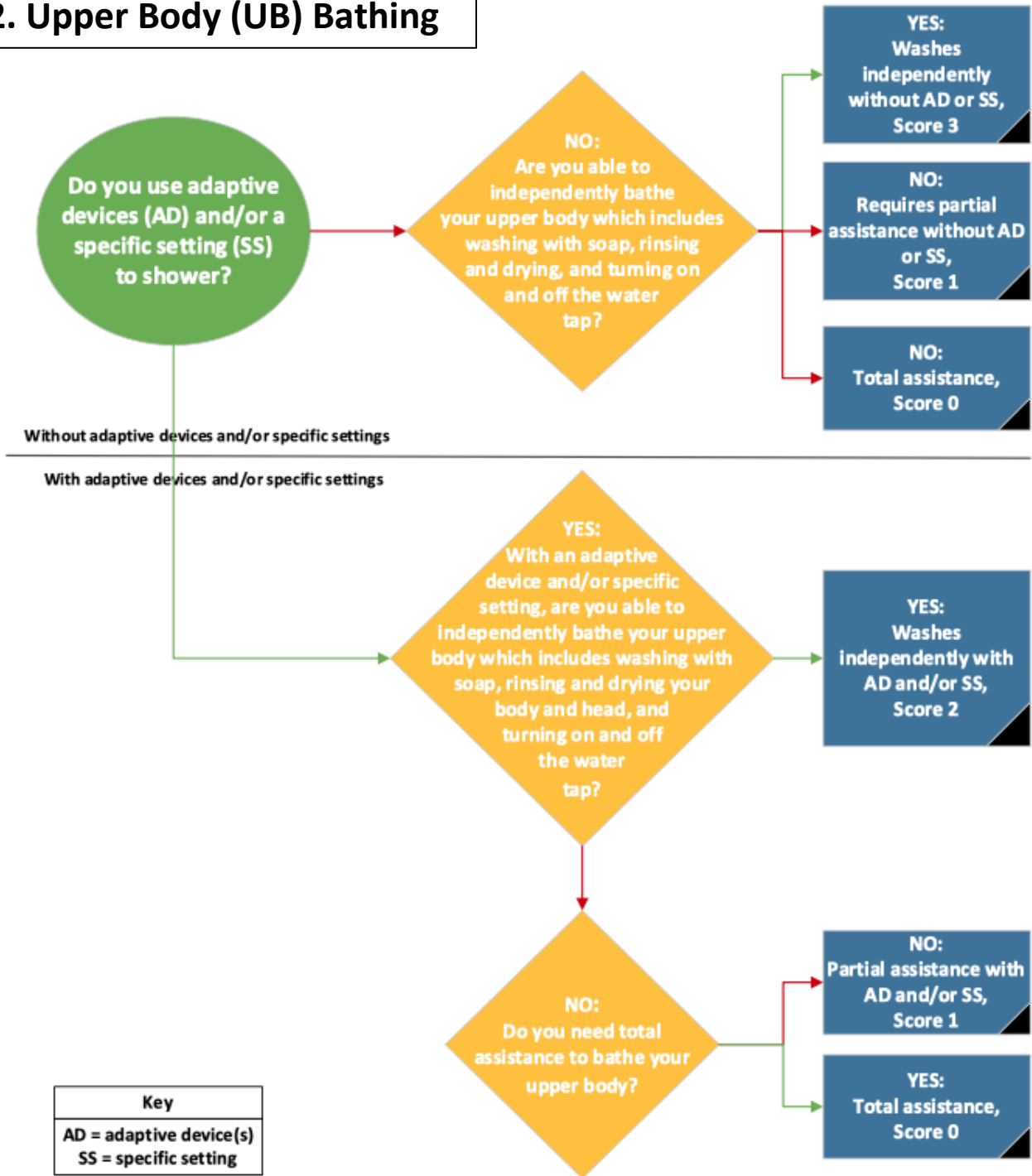
Bilevel Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP)	An external ventilation device that does not go into one's body to support breathing. It gives someone extra air when breathing in and helps them breathe out.	
Electric Aid	Devices that facilitate mobility	Manual wheelchair, electric wheelchair, scooter
Intermittent Assisted Ventilation (IAV)	A machine that goes over someone's face to help them breathe. It provides air to someone as they need it if they have difficulty breathing sometimes	
Long sitting	Sitting on a flat surface with legs out straight	
Positive end-expiratory pressure (PEEP)	At the end of each breath, a PEEP mask maintains the pressure in the lungs to allow for increased oxygen to be delivered to the person; used in conjunction with mechanical ventilation	
Ring sitting	Sitting with knees bent slightly and feet in front so that the legs form a ring	
Residual Urine Volume (RUV)	The amount of urine (measured in cc) left in the bladder after voiding/urination	
Specific Setting	Any setting that deviates from the typical way of performing the task, or the only setting a participant can perform an activity in	Some potential specific settings include: bed/chair (supine or seated), shower with grab-bars, wheelchair, tub bench, shower chair For example, if the only setting a participant can dress in is a hospital bed, that would be described as a specific setting
Tracheal Tube/Tracheostomy Tube (TT)	A tube that is placed into the trachea to keep it open for breathing; used by individuals to receive breathing support or need help with clearing mucus and other secretions from their lungs.	

Self-Care

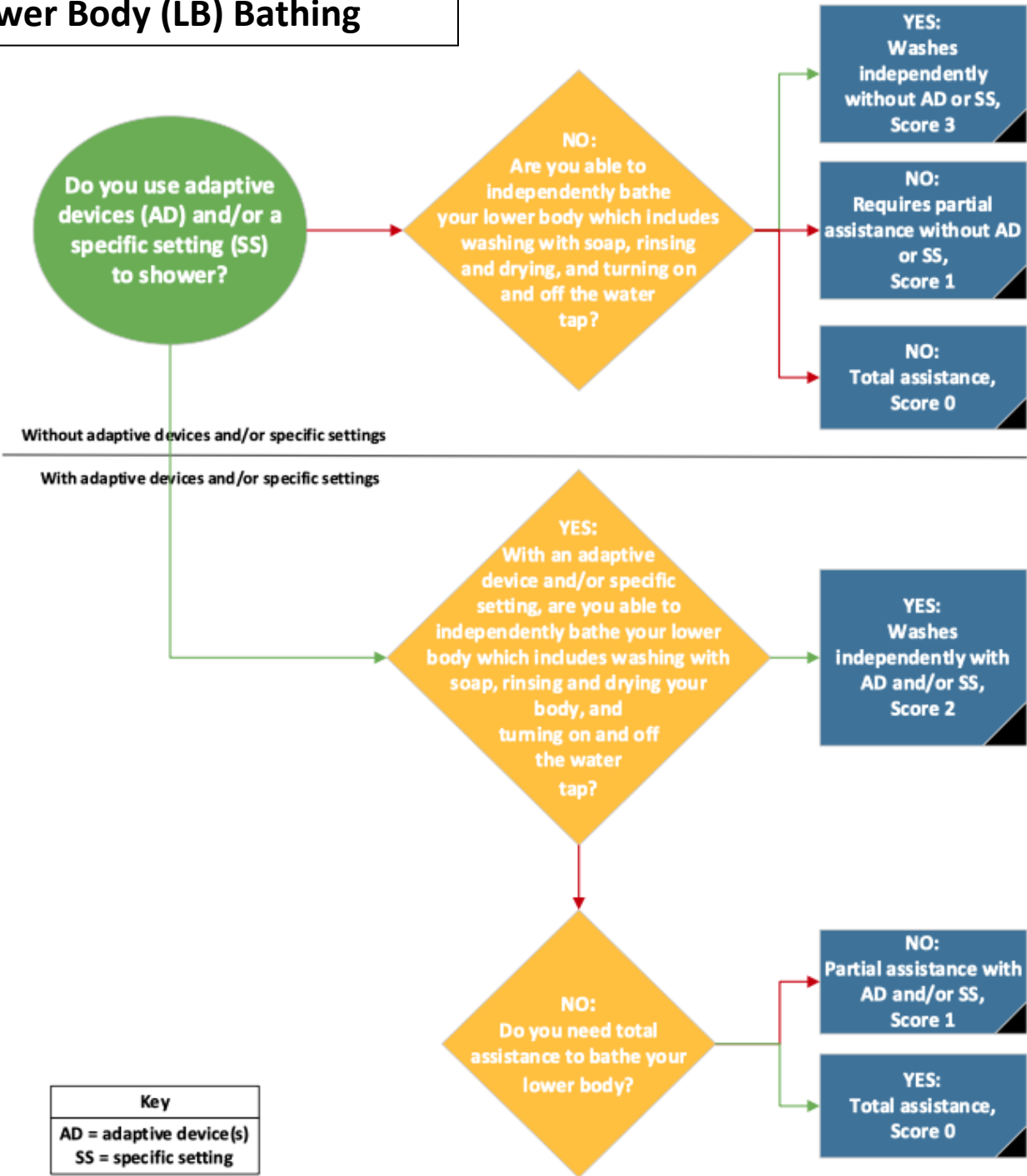
1. Feeding



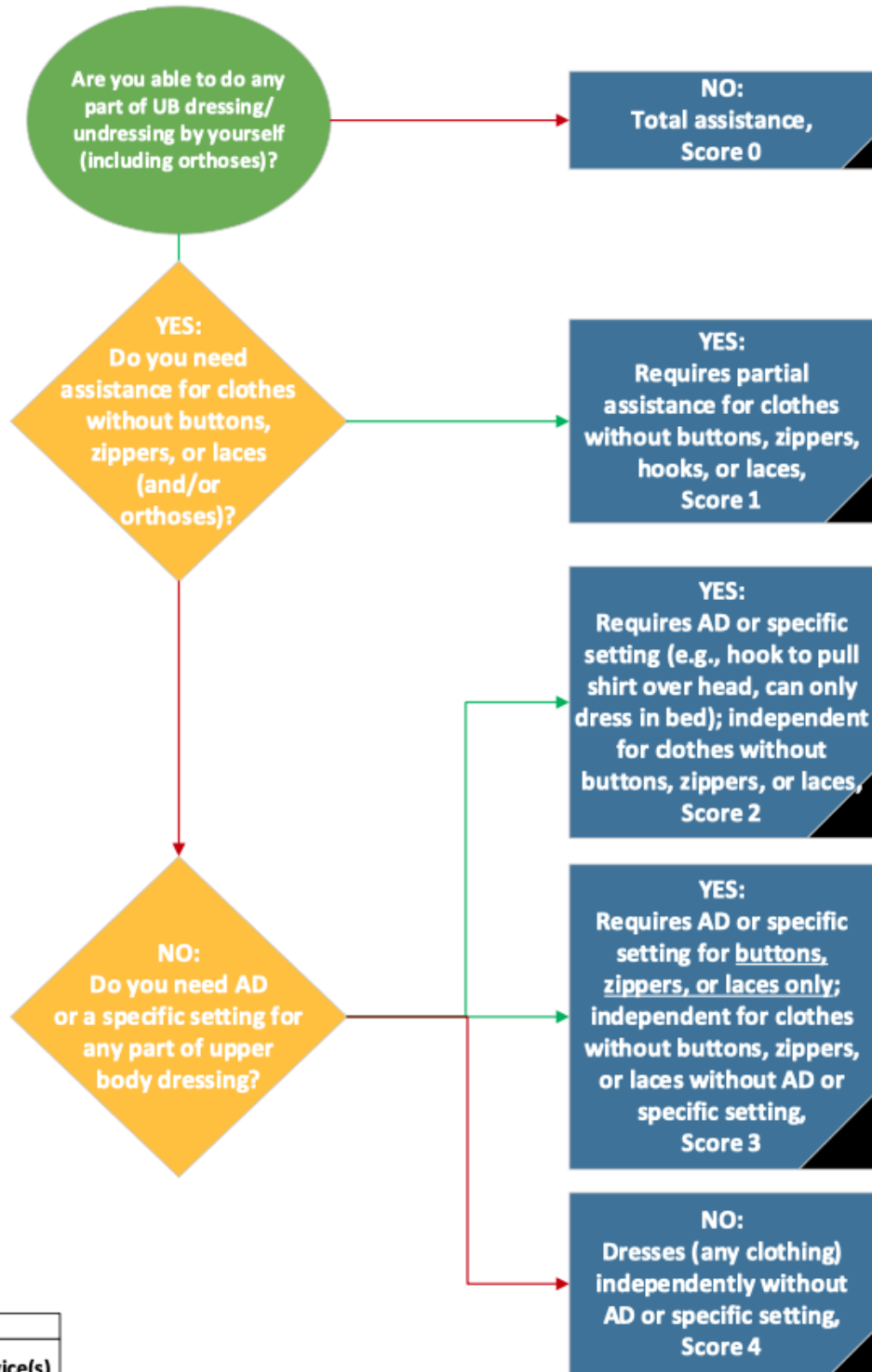
2. Upper Body (UB) Bathing



Lower Body (LB) Bathing

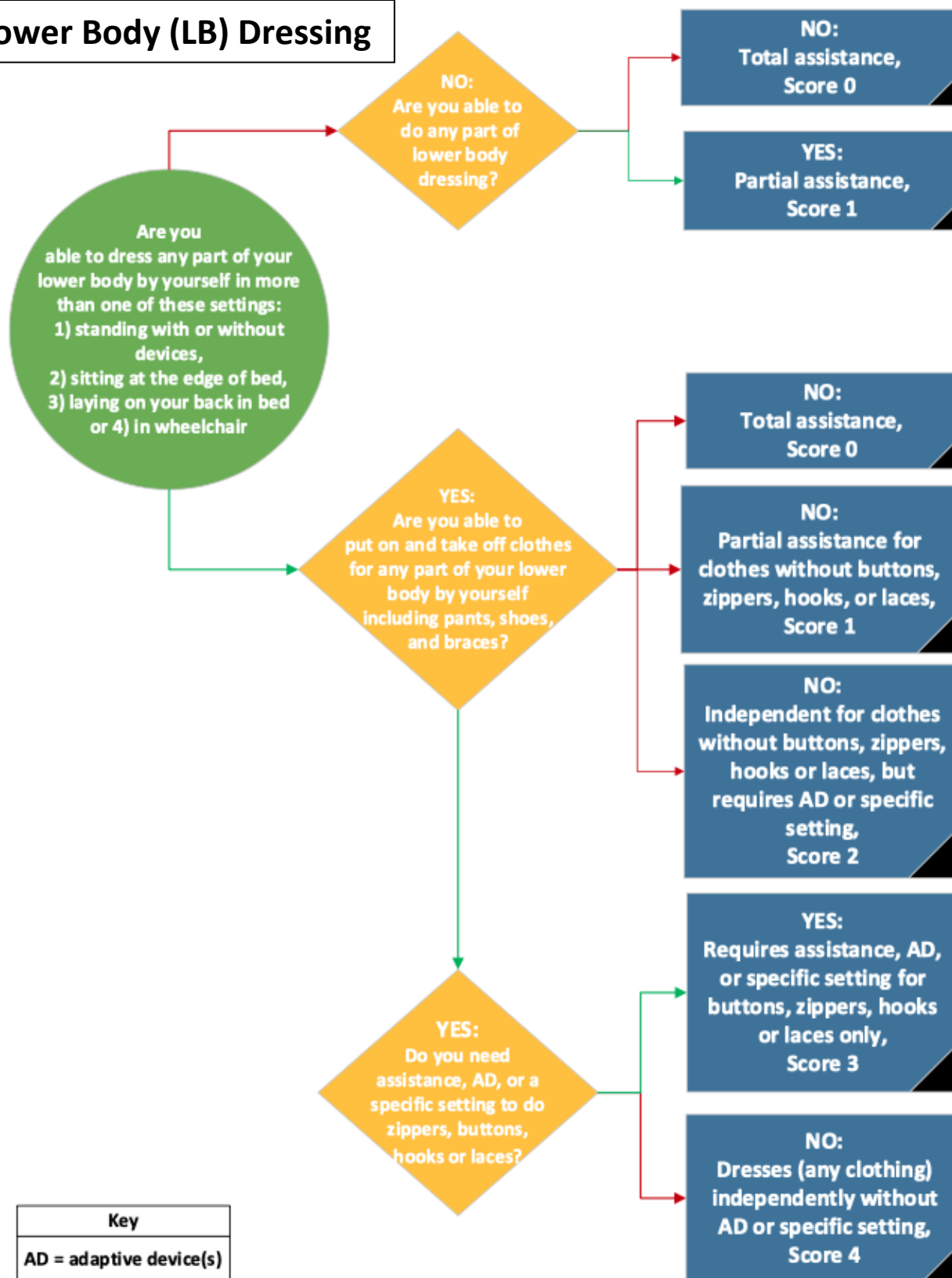


3. Upper Body (UB) Dressing



Key
AD = adaptive device(s)

Lower Body (LB) Dressing

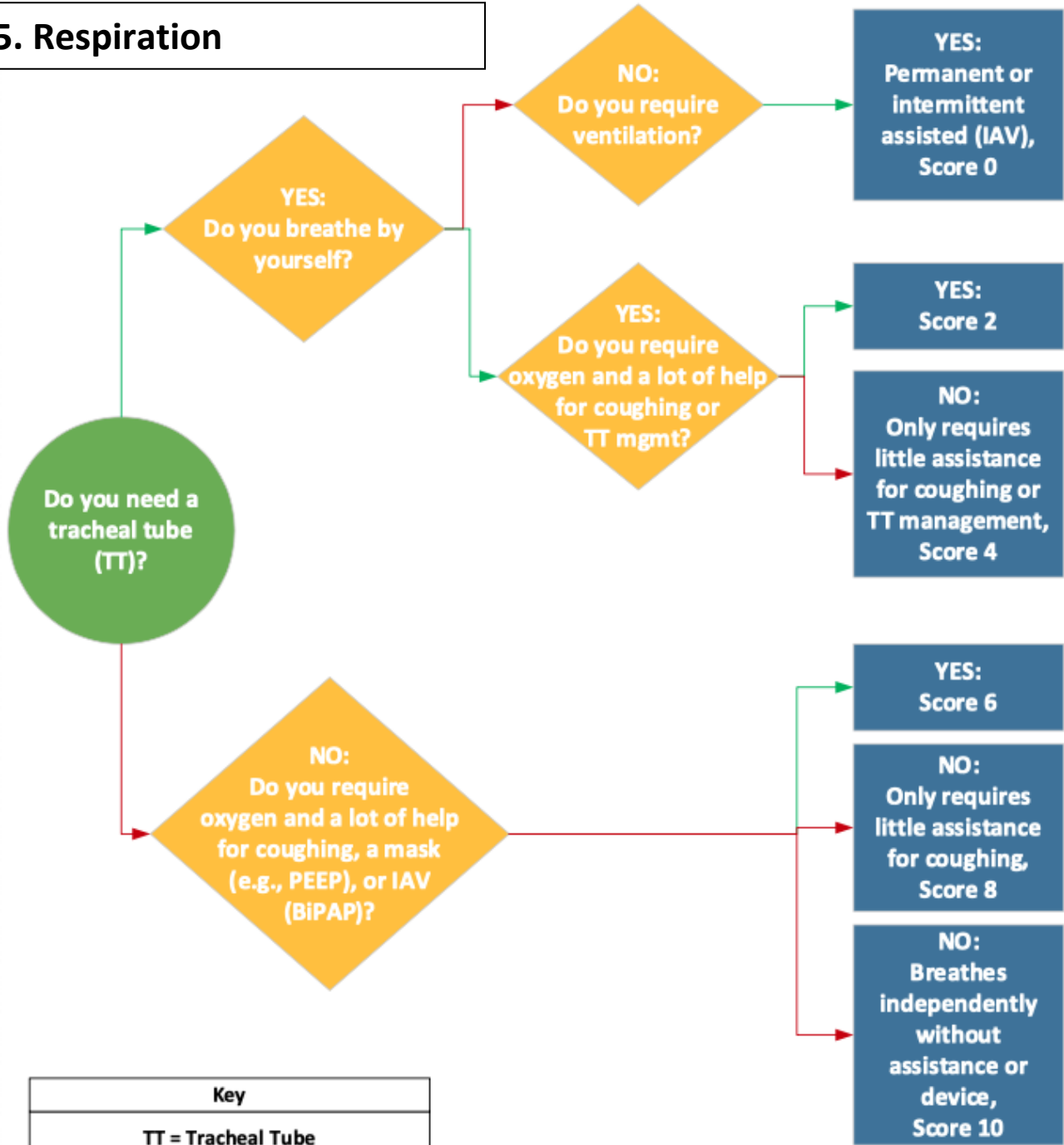


4. Grooming



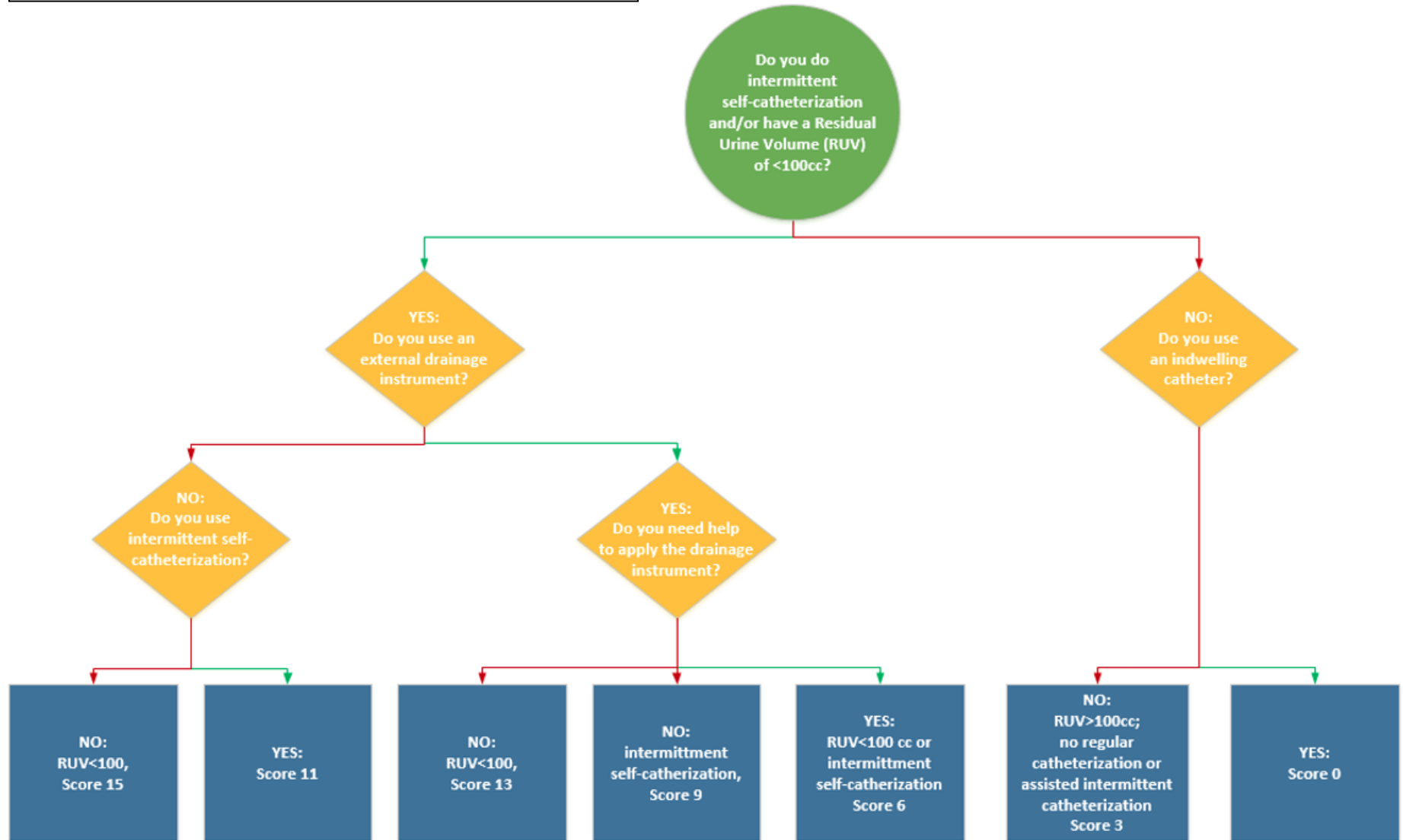
Respiration and Sphincter Management

5. Respiration



Key
TT = Tracheal Tube
PEEP = Positive End-Expiratory Pressure
IAV = Intermittent Assisted Ventilation
BiPAP = Bilevel Positive Airway Pressure

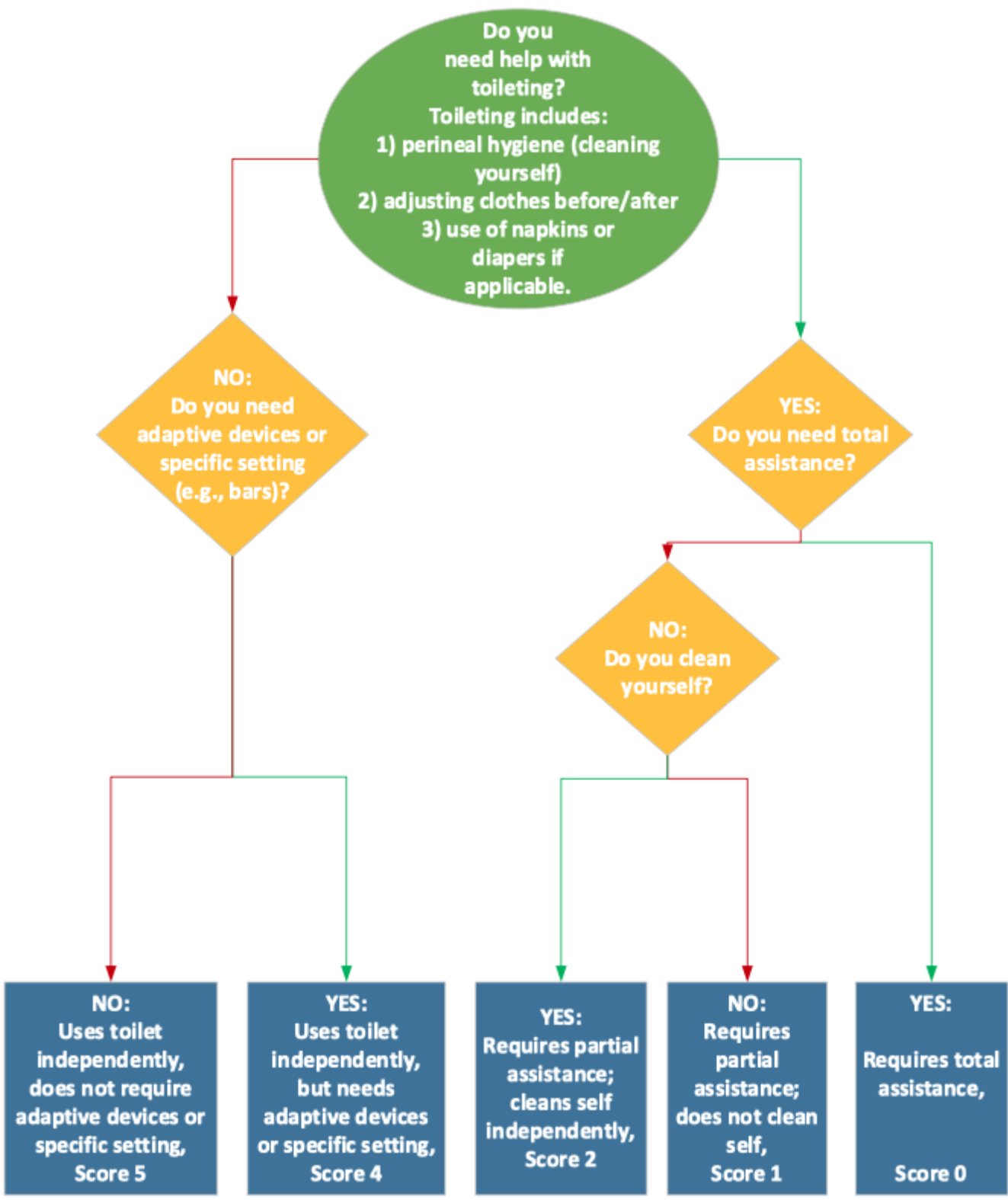
6. Sphincter Management: Bladder



7. Sphincter Management: Bowel



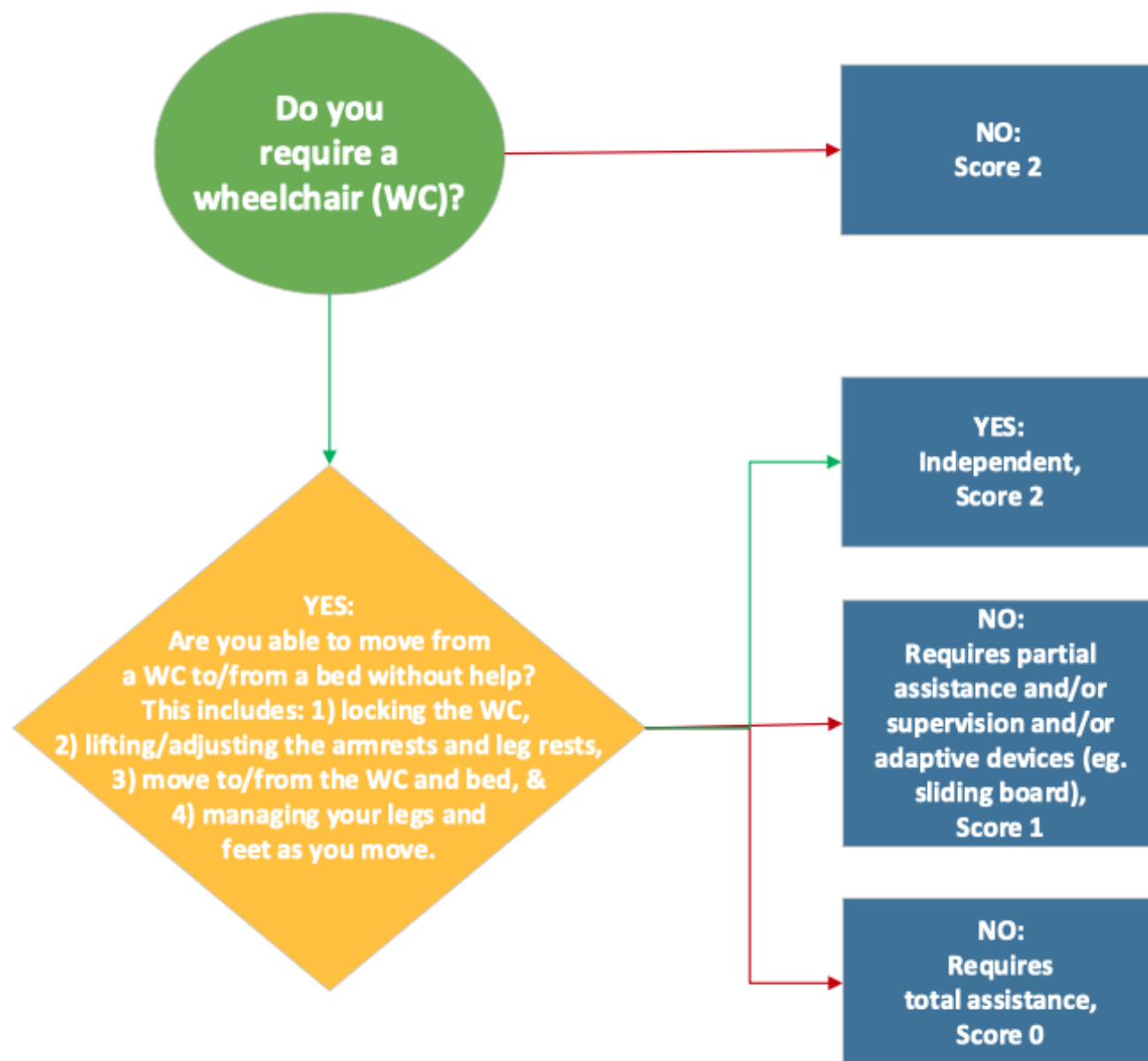
8. Use of Toilet

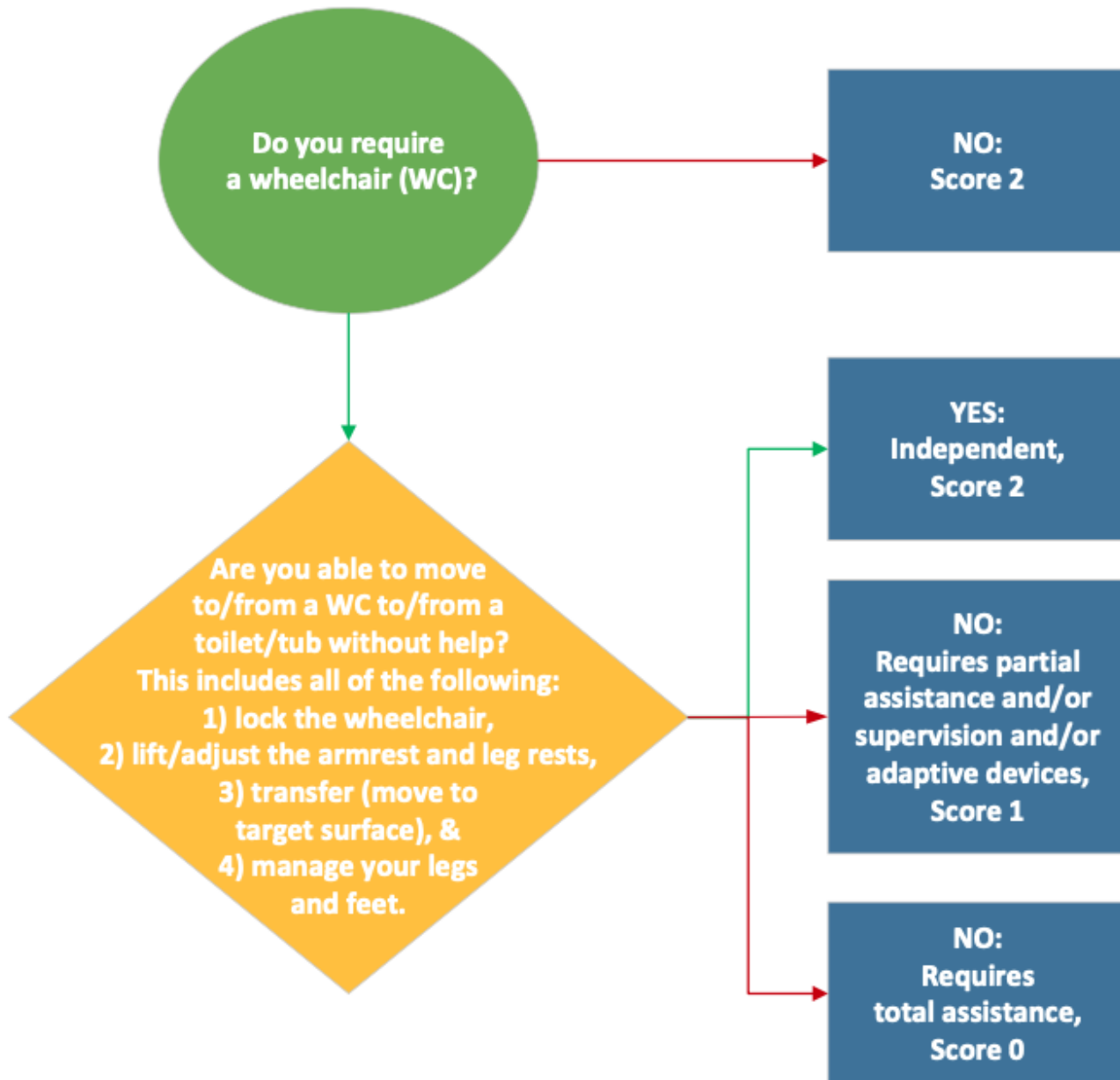


Mobility (Room and Toilet)

9. Mobility in Bed and Action to Prevent Pressure Injuries



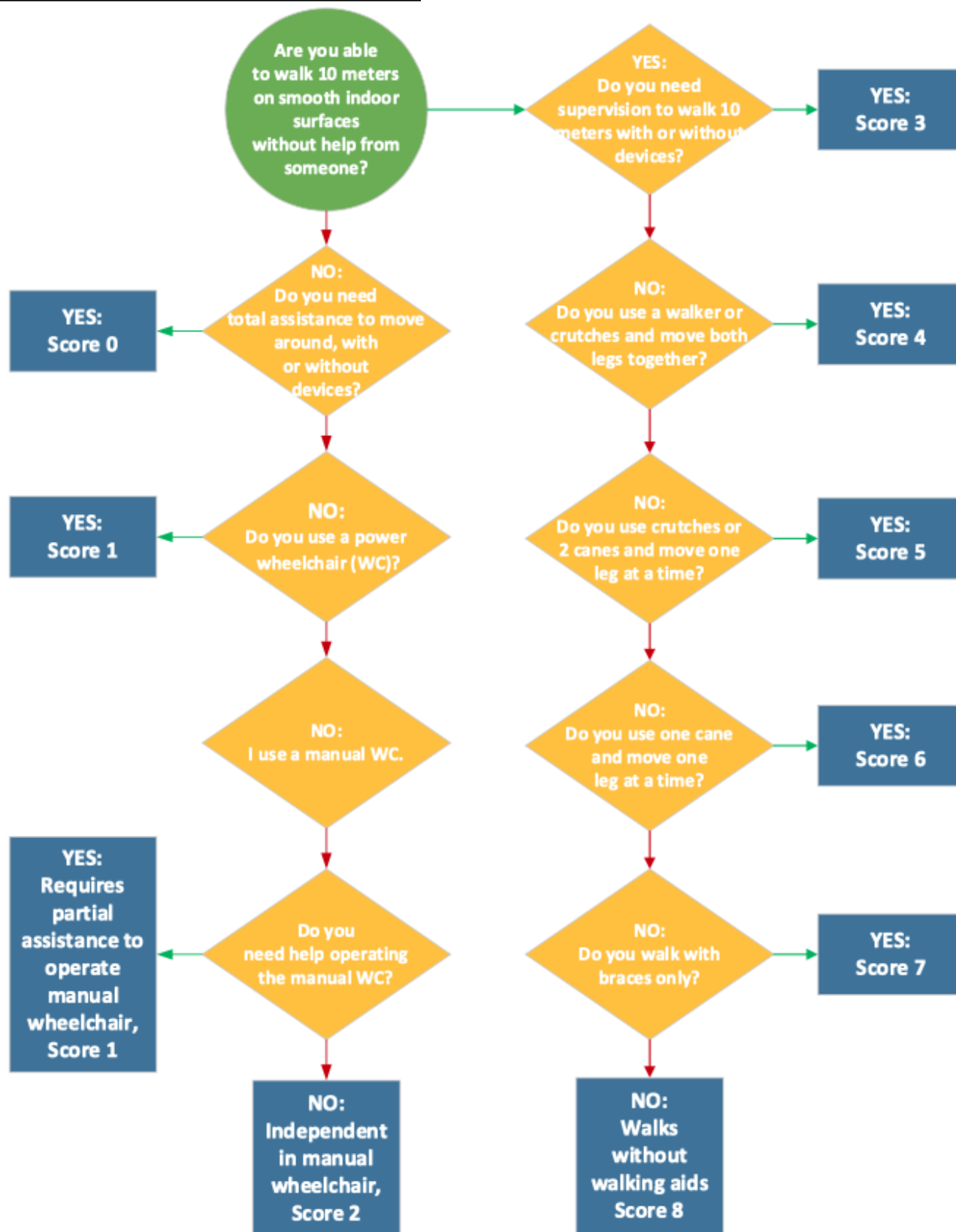
10. Transfers: Bed-wheelchair

11. Transfers: Wheelchair-Toilet-Tub

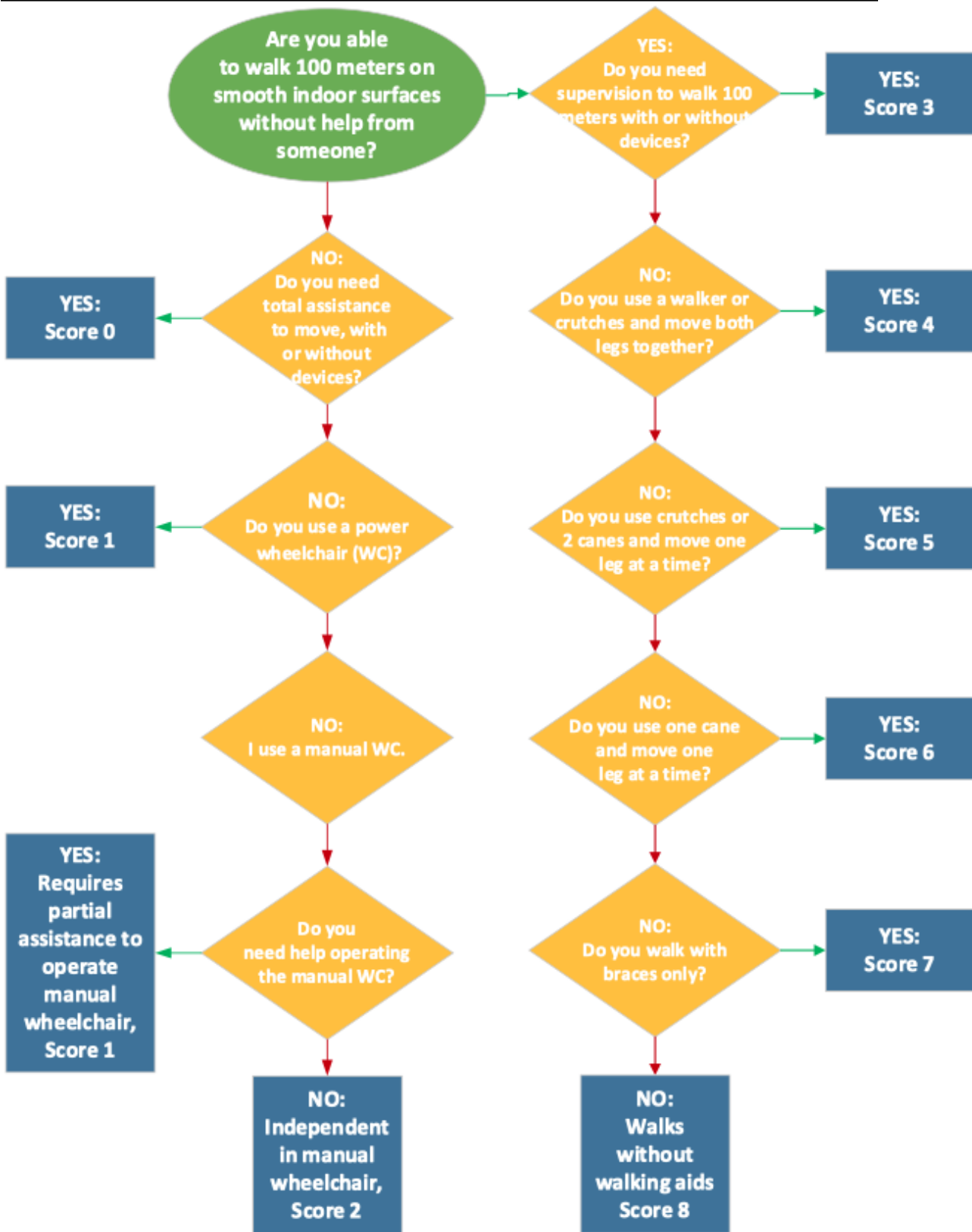
Mobility

(Indoors & outdoors, on even surface)

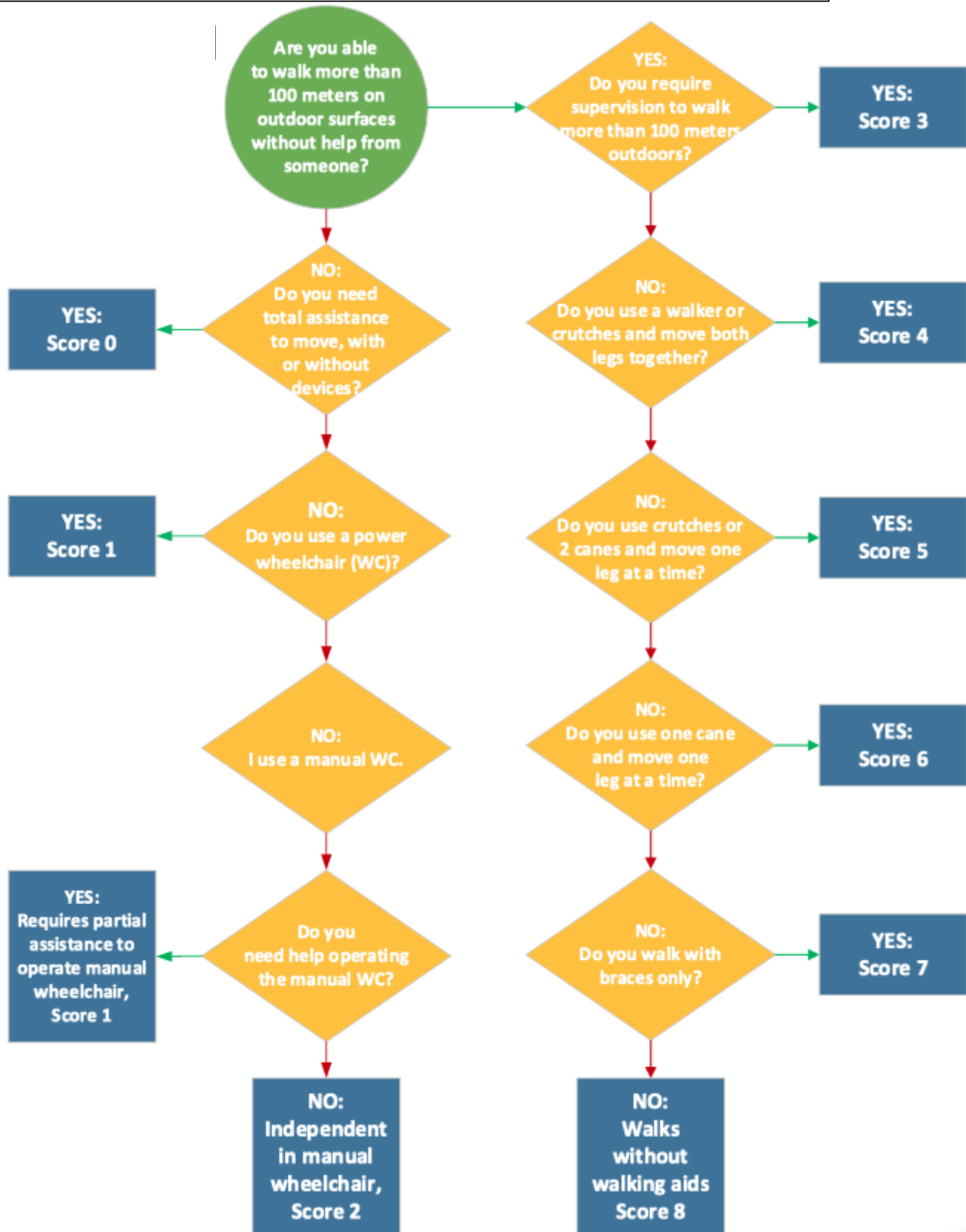
12. Mobility Indoors



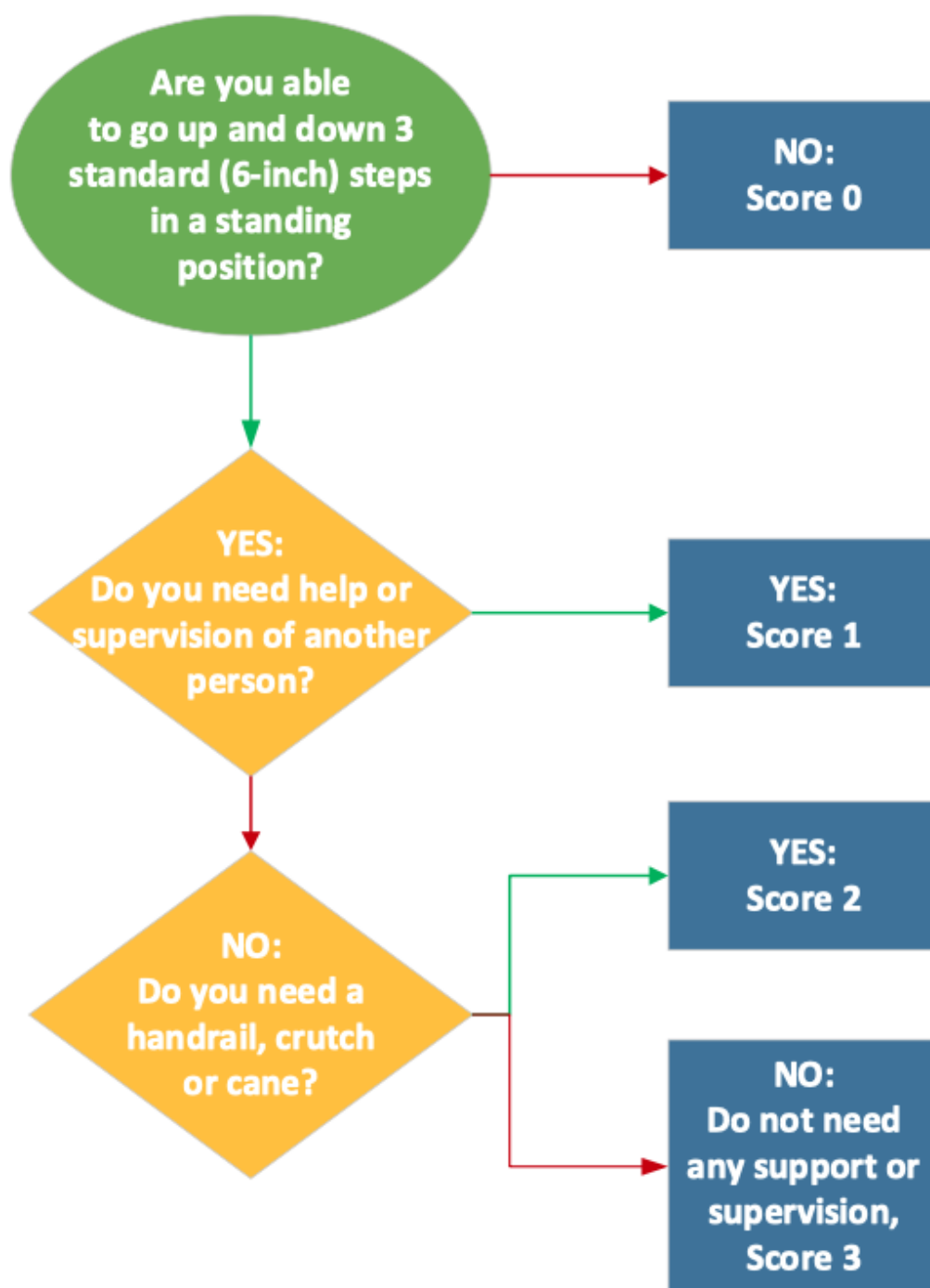
13. Mobility for Moderate Distances (10-100 meters)

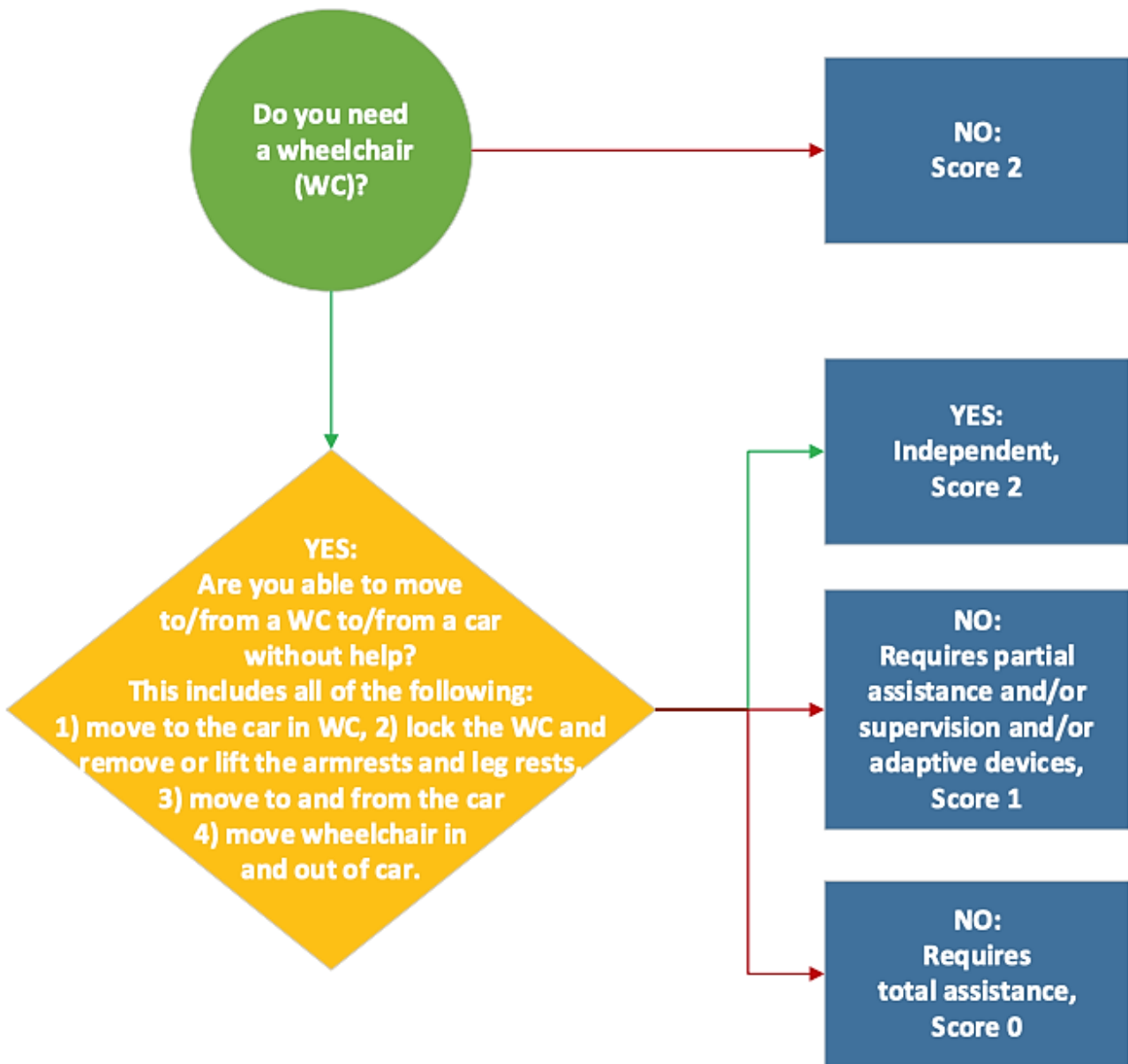


14. Mobility Outdoors (more than 100 meters)



15. Stair Management



16. Transfers: Wheelchair-Car

17. Transfers: Wheelchair to/from Floor