### About the Measure

<table>
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<th>Domain:</th>
<th>Social Environments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure:</td>
<td>Social Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Definition:</td>
<td>This measure is a questionnaire to assess the type, size, closeness, and frequency of contacts in a respondent's current social network.</td>
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<td>Purpose:</td>
<td>This measure allows researchers to categorize individuals based on social connectedness and can highlight those at risk for social isolation. The importance of social ties is becoming increasingly recognized as strong associations have consistently been found between social support networks with physical and mental health outcomes (Berkman, et al., 2003; Loucks, et al., 2006).</td>
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### About the Protocol

| Description of Protocol: | The Berkman-Syme Social Network Index (SNI) is a self-reported questionnaire for use in adults aged 18 to 64 that is a composite measure of four types of social connections: marital status (married versus not); sociability (number and frequency of contacts with children, close relatives, and close friends); church group membership (yes versus no); and membership in other community organizations (yes versus no). The Berkman-Syme Social Network Index (SNI) allows researchers to categorize individuals into four levels of social connection: socially isolated (individuals with low intimate contacts—not married, fewer than six friends or relatives, and no membership in either church or community groups), moderately isolated, moderately integrated, and socially integrated. |
| Selection Rationale: | The Berkman-Syme Social Network Index (SNI) was initially developed for a study of an adult population that purposefully excluded older persons, whereas the Lubben Social Network Scale was developed specifically for use among elderly populations (Biordi & Nicholson, 2008; Berkman & Syme, 1979; Lubben & Gironda, 2004). This protocol was selected because it is a low burden, readily available measure of social networks which has been used both in clinical practice and in research settings. Also, it has been associated with mortality and mental and physical health outcomes. |
| Specific Instructions: | None |
| Protocol Text: | The following two-page questionnaire asks about your social support. Please read the following questions and circle the response that most closely describes your current situation. |

1. How many close friends do you have, people that you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters?

[ ] 0 None
2. How many of these close friends do you see at least once a month?

[] 0 None
[] 1 1 or 2
[] 2 3 to 5
[] 3 6 to 9
[] 4 10 or more
[] 0 Unknown

3. How many relatives do you have, people, that you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters?

[] 0 None
[] 1 1 or 2
[] 2 3 to 5
[] 3 6 to 9
[] 4 10 or more
[] 0 Unknown

4. How many of these relatives do you see at least once a month?

[] 0 None
[] 1 1 or 2
[] 2 3 to 5
[] 3 6 to 9
[] 4 10 or more
[] 0 Unknown

5. Do you participate in any groups such as a senior center, social or work group, religious connected group, self-help group, or charity, public service or community group?

[] 0 No
[] 1 Yes
[] 9 Unknown

6. About how often do you go to religious meetings or services?

[] 0 Never or almost never
[] 1 Once or twice a year
[] 2 Every few months
[] 3 Once or twice a month
[] 4 Once a week
[] 5 More than once a week
[] 9 Unknown

7. Is there someone available to you whom you can count on to listen to you when

[ ]
you need to talk?

[ ] 0 None
[ ] 1 1 or 2
[ ] 2 3 to 5
[ ] 3 6 to 9
[ ] 4 10 or more
[ ] 0 Unknown

8. Is there someone available to give you good advice about a problem?

[ ] 0 None
[ ] 1 1 or 2
[ ] 2 3 to 5
[ ] 3 6 to 9
[ ] 4 10 or more
[ ] 0 Unknown

9. Is there someone available to you who shows you love and affection?

[ ] 0 None
[ ] 1 1 or 2
[ ] 2 3 to 5
[ ] 3 6 to 9
[ ] 4 10 or more
[ ] 0 Unknown

10. Can you count on anyone to provide you with emotional support (talking over problems or helping you make a difficult decision)?

[ ] 0 None
[ ] 1 1 or 2
[ ] 2 3 to 5
[ ] 3 6 to 9
[ ] 4 10 or more
[ ] 0 Unknown

11. Do you have as much contact as you would like with someone you feel close to, someone in whom you can trust and confide?

[ ] 0 None
[ ] 1 1 or 2
[ ] 2 3 to 5
[ ] 3 6 to 9
[ ] 4 10 or more
[ ] 0 Unknown

**Scoring Instructions:**
Loucks *et al.*, 2006 scored as follows: Married (no=0; yes=1); close friends and relatives (0–2 friends and 0–2 relatives=0; all other scores=1); group participation (no=0; yes=1); participation in religious meetings or services (less than or equal to every few months=0; greater than or equal to once or twice a month=1). The latter two
categories were mutually exclusive from each other. Scores were summed: 0 or 1 being the most isolated category; and 2, 3 or 4 formed the other three categories of increasing social connectedness.

Psychometrics on the SNI and additional evidence for the scale's predictive validity are available in Berkman and Breslow (1983).

<p>| Participant: | Adults, aged 20 to 65 years |
| Language of Source: | English |
| Personnel and Training Required: | None |
| Equipment Needs: | The respondent will need a copy of the questionnaire |
| Protocol Type: | Self administered questionnaire |
| Requirements: | |
| Requirements Category | Required (Yes/No): |
| Major equipment | No |
| Specialized training | No |
| Specialized requirements for biospecimen collection | No |
| Average time of greater than 15 minutes in an unaffected individual | No |
| Common Data Elements: | TBD by RTI Staff |</p>
<table>
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