# **Scoring the Symptoms of Illness Checklist (SIC)**

## Total SIC Score

The total SIC score is computed by multiplying the frequency rating (scored as 0 for ‘A,’ 1-5 for ‘B’-‘F’) by the severity rating (scored as 0 for ‘G,’ 1-4 for ‘H’-‘K’; these are called “impact” ratings in the questionnaire) for each symptom that is circled as present, and summing the individual symptom values (frequency X severity) across symptoms. In many cases, respondents only rate the symptoms they have, leaving the others unrated (i.e., they do not circle the ‘A’ for frequency and/or the ‘G’ for impact, which would indicate that the symptom was not present); these are given the same value as ‘A’ and ‘G’—a value of ‘0’—and therefore do not contribute to the total SIC score.

## Item 2: Blood Pressure

Because self-report is not a reliable method for assessing blood pressure, item 2 (high blood pressure) is not included in calculating the SIC score. (This item is still included in the SIC, however, to avoid possible reactions by respondents who believe that the symptom was overlooked.)

## Item 33: ‘Other’ Symptom

The last item (item 33) allows the participant to write in ‘other’ symptoms. Each symptom indicated under ‘other’ needs to be examined to determine whether it belongs under the existing list of symptoms or is not subject to recategorization (e.g. teeth grinding). If the ‘other’ symptom belongs to a different SIC item, recategorize it. Thus, only uncategorized symptoms will remain in the ‘other’ item, and these will not be scored (we have found that fewer than 3% of participants listed a symptom as ‘other’ that could not be recategorized under the existing list of symptoms). Thus, while the SIC consists of 33 items, only 31 (items 1, 3-32) are scored.

## Missing Values

In cases where the frequency of a symptom is indicated (i.e., ‘B’ through ‘F’), but not the severity (i.e., there is no rating, or ‘G’ has been circled), the missing severity rating is replaced with the average severity rating of that symptom from those who marked it. Similarly, in cases where the severity of a symptom is indicated (i.e., ‘H’ through ‘K’), but not the frequency (i.e., there is no rating, or ‘A’ has been circled), the missing frequency rating is replaced with the average frequency rating of that symptom from those who marked it. Thus, when respondents mark a symptom as present but at the same time indicate that it was not present (i.e., circled either an ‘A’ or ‘G’), the symptom is treated as present.