A dependent variable, also referred to as an outcome variable, is a variable that will be measured by the investigator. More specifically, the dependent variable is the variable, or outcome, that is hypothesized to be affected by the independent variable and, therefore, the variable that is measured. More simply, the dependent variable is the measure that determines if a difference or relationship between the independent and dependent variables exists. Examples of dependent variables include the following:

- Scores on a knowledge assessment
- Degrees of range of motion
- Level of function
- Patient-oriented outcome scores