

Screening for Mood/Anxiety Disorders or Binge Eating

Mood Disorder Screen

While there are several different kinds of mood disorder, described in detail in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition (DSM IV) or the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision Version for 2007 (ICD-10), the main features are:

- low mood
- reduced energy and activity
- concentration difficulties
- reduced capacity for enjoyment
- marked tiredness after minimum effort
- sleep disturbance – often early morning wakening
- marked changes in appetite
- self-esteem and self-confidence lowered
- ideas of guilt or worthlessness & cognitive distortions

Depending upon the number and severity of the symptoms, a depressive episode may be specified as mild, moderate or severe.

Anxiety Disorders Screen

Disorders in which the manifestation of anxiety is the major symptom covers a range of disorders including panic attacks, specific phobias (e.g. agoraphobia), obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance-induced anxiety disorder and anxiety disorder due to a general medical condition. A full list with diagnostic criteria can be found in DSM IV and ICD-10

There are also a number of useful screening tools which take only a few minutes and can be immediately scored, such as:

- Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS)
- Beck Depression Inventory – FastScreen
- Beck Anxiety Inventory
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder – 7 items (GAD-7)

Research criteria for binge-eating disorder

- A. Recurrent episodes of binge eating. An episode of binge eating is characterized by both of the following;

- (1) eating, in a discrete period of time (e.g., within any 2-hour period), an amount of food that is definitely larger than most people would eat in a similar period of time under similar circumstances
 - (2) a sense of lack of control over eating during the episode (e.g., a feeling that one cannot stop eating or control what or how much one is eating)
- B. The binge-eating episodes are associated with three (or more) of the following:
- (1) eating much more rapidly than normal
 - (2) eating until feeling uncomfortably full
 - (3) eating large amounts of food when not feeling physically hungry
 - (4) eating alone because of being embarrassed by how much one is eating
 - (5) feeling disgusted with oneself, depressed, or very guilty after overeating
- C. Marked distress regarding binge eating is present.
- D. The binge eating occurs, on average, at least 2 days a week for 6 months.
- E. The binge eating is not associated with the regular use of inappropriate compensatory behaviours (e.g., purging, fasting, excessive exercise) and does not occur exclusively during the course of Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa.

Source: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition, American Psychiatric Association, 1994