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Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7

The **Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7** (**GAD-7**) is a self-reported [questionnaire](#) for screening and severity measuring of [generalized anxiety disorder](#) (GAD).[1] The GAD-7 is normally used in outpatient and primary care settings for referral to a psychiatrist pending outcome.[2]

The GAD-7 has seven items, which measure severity of various signs of GAD according to reported response categories with assigned points.[2] The GAD-7 items include:

Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 item	
Synonyms	GAD-7
LOINC	69737-5 (https://s.detail s.loinc.org/LOINC/6973 7-5.html?sections=Co mprehensive)

1. Nervousness
2. Inability to stop worrying
3. Excessive worry
4. Restlessness
5. Difficulty in relaxing
6. Easy irritation
7. Fear of something awful happening[3]

An additional question at the end asks for a global rating of the severity of the patient's anxiety over the past 2 weeks.[2]

Interpretation of results

The assessment is indicated by the total score, which is made up by adding together the scores for the scale of all seven items with responses getting 0 to 3 points:

- Not at all (0 points)
- Several days (1 point)
- More than half the days (2 points)
- Nearly every day (3 points)[4]

The normative data enable users of the GAD-7 to discern whether an individual's anxiety score is normal, or mildly, moderately, or severely elevated.[5] However, it cannot be used as replacement for [clinical assessment](#) and additional evaluation should be used to confirm a [diagnosis](#) of GAD.[6]

Score	Risk Level	Suggested Intervention
0-4	No to Low risk	None
5-9	Mild	Repeat on follow-up
10-14	Moderate	Further evaluation required. Consider adjusting treatment plan.
15+	Severe	Adjust treatment plan. Higher level of care needed. Pharmacology re-evaluation.

Reliability and validity

The GAD-7 was originally validated in a primary care sample and a cutoff score of 10 (which the authors considered optimal) had a sensitivity value of 0.89 and a specificity value of 0.82 for identifying GAD. The authors of the questionnaire also found acceptable sensitivity and specificity values when the questionnaire was used as a general screen to identify other anxiety disorders (Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety, and PTSD) (GAD-7, score ≥ 8: sensitivity: 0.77, specificity: 0.82).[7]

The GAD-7 has shown adequate internal consistency reliability and validity for assessing anxiety across a wide range of samples and settings. It has been used in more than 2500 peer reviewed publications indexed in PubMed (current search here (https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.g ov/?term=%28%22anxiety%22%5BMeSH+Terms%5D+OR+%22anxiety%22%5BAll+Fields%5 D+OR+%22anxieties%22%5BAll+Fields%5D+OR+%22anxiety+s%22%5BAll+Fields%5D%29+ AND+%22gad7%22%5BAll+Fields%5D&sort=)). The consensus is that it can efficient tool for screening for GAD and assessing its severity in clinical practice and research.[8] A meta-analysis found that it achieved acceptable accuracy at a cutoff point of 8 (sensitivity of 0.83, specificity: 0.84, pooling 12 samples and 5223 participants).[9]

The use of sumscores (i.e. summing the scores of each item) is supported by psychometric studies in some contexts, but using techniques based on factor analysis are deemed more precise.[10]

See also

- Diagnostic classification and rating scales used in psychiatry
- Patient Health Questionnaire

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External links

- Official website (https://www.phqscreeners.com/)

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