

PHQ-9 — AI-Administered Depression Screening

Time frame: *Over the last 2 weeks*

Instruction shown to user:

Please read each statement carefully and choose the option that best describes how often you experienced the problem over the **past two weeks**.

Q1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things

Options (sentence form):

- **0** – I did not experience a loss of interest or pleasure at all.
 - **1** – I experienced a loss of interest or pleasure on several days.
 - **2** – I experienced a loss of interest or pleasure on more than half of the days.
 - **3** – I experienced a loss of interest or pleasure nearly every day.
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Q2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless

Options:

- **0** – I did not feel down, depressed, or hopeless at all.
 - **1** – I felt down, depressed, or hopeless on several days.
 - **2** – I felt down, depressed, or hopeless on more than half of the days.
 - **3** – I felt down, depressed, or hopeless nearly every day.
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Q3. Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping too much

Options:

- **0** – I had no problems with sleep.
 - **1** – I had sleep problems on several days.
 - **2** – I had sleep problems on more than half of the days.
 - **3** – I had sleep problems nearly every day.
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Q4. Feeling tired or having little energy

Options:

- **0** – I did not feel unusually tired or low on energy.
- **1** – I felt tired or low on energy on several days.
- **2** – I felt tired or low on energy on more than half of the days.
- **3** – I felt tired or low on energy nearly every day.

Q5. Poor appetite or overeating

Options:

- 0 – My appetite and eating habits were normal.
 - 1 – I had appetite changes on several days.
 - 2 – I had appetite changes on more than half of the days.
 - 3 – I had appetite changes nearly every day.
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Q6. Feeling bad about yourself — feeling like a failure or that you have let yourself or your family down

Options:

- 0 – I did not feel bad about myself or feel like a failure.
 - 1 – I felt bad about myself on several days.
 - 2 – I felt bad about myself on more than half of the days.
 - 3 – I felt bad about myself nearly every day.
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Q7. Trouble concentrating on tasks such as reading, studying, or watching something

Options:

- 0 – I had no difficulty concentrating.
 - 1 – I had difficulty concentrating on several days.
 - 2 – I had difficulty concentrating on more than half of the days.
 - 3 – I had difficulty concentrating nearly every day.
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Q8. Moving or speaking slowly, or being unusually restless and fidgety (noticeable by others)

Options:

- 0 – I did not experience any noticeable changes in movement or speech.
 - 1 – I noticed changes in movement or restlessness on several days.
 - 2 – I noticed changes in movement or restlessness on more than half of the days.
 - 3 – I noticed changes in movement or restlessness nearly every day.
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Q9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or thoughts of harming yourself

High-risk question

Options:

- **0** – I did not have thoughts about being better off dead or harming myself.
 - **1** – I had such thoughts on several days.
 - **2** – I had such thoughts on more than half of the days.
 - **3** – I had such thoughts nearly every day.
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Scoring Logic (For AI)

Total Score = Sum of scores from Q1 to Q9

Minimum = 0

Maximum = 27

Interpretation Rules (Must be hard-coded)

Score Range Interpretation

0–4	Minimal symptoms
5–9	Mild depressive symptoms
10–14	Moderate depressive symptoms
15–19	Moderately severe depressive symptoms
20–27	Severe depressive symptoms

Mandatory Safety Rule (CRITICAL)

If **Q9 score** ≥ 1 , AI must:

- Immediately flag **suicide risk**
- Interrupt normal flow
- Display empathetic support language
- Encourage **human help / escalation**
- Provide crisis resources

This rule applies **regardless of total score**.

Language AI Is Allowed vs Not Allowed

✗ *“You are depressed.”*

✗ *“You have clinical depression.”*

✓ *“Your responses suggest depressive symptoms at a moderate/severe level.”*

✓ *“This screening result is not a diagnosis.”*