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Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7)

English Version

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)

<i>Over the <u>last two weeks</u>, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?</i>	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid, as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

Column totals: _____ + _____ + _____ + _____

Total score: _____

<p>8. If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?</p>			
<p>Not difficult at all</p>	<p>Somewhat difficult</p>	<p>Very difficult</p>	<p>Extremely difficult</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)

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Description

The **Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7)** is a **brief, self-report screening tool** designed to assess symptoms of **generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)** and measure **anxiety severity** over the **past two weeks**. It is commonly used in **primary care, mental health, and research settings** to facilitate early detection and monitoring of anxiety disorders.

While originally developed for **generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)**, research has demonstrated that the GAD-7 also **effectively screens for other anxiety disorders**, including **panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and post-traumatic stress**

Structure and Administration

The GAD-7 consists of **seven items**, each assessing **core symptoms of GAD** based on **DSM-5 criteria**. Respondents indicate how often they have experienced these symptoms over the **past two weeks**, using a **4-point Likert scale**:

Response Option	Score
Not at all	0
Several days	1
More than half the days	2
Nearly every day	3

The questionnaire is **self-administered**, but it can also be completed through **clinician interviews** or **computerized assessments**. It typically takes **2–3 minutes** to complete.

Scoring and Interpretation

Total GAD-7 scores range from **0 to 21**. Higher scores indicate greater **severity of anxiety symptoms**:

Score	Anxiety Severity	Clinical Interpretation
0-4	Minimal anxiety	No intervention needed
5-9	Mild anxiety	Monitor; consider follow-up
10-14	Moderate anxiety	Possible clinical diagnosis; further assessment recommended
15-21	Severe anxiety	High likelihood of an anxiety disorder; active treatment needed

Diagnostic Cut-Point for GAD

- A **score of ≥ 10** is considered **optimal for detecting GAD**, with high **sensitivity (89%)** and **specificity (82%)** (Spitzer et al., 2006).
- Scores **≥ 8** may indicate clinically significant **anxiety symptoms** and warrant further evaluation (Podda et al., 2020).

Psychometric Properties

The **GAD-7** has demonstrated **strong validity and reliability** across **clinical and general populations**, making it a robust screening tool for anxiety disorders.

Metric	Value
Sensitivity (cut-off ≥ 10)	0.89 (89%) (Spitzer et al., 2006)
Specificity (cut-off ≥ 10)	0.82 (82%) (Spitzer et al., 2006)
Positive Predictive Value (PPV)	0.75–0.85 , depending on population (Löwe et al., 2008)
Negative Predictive Value (NPV)	0.97 (97%) (Löwe et al., 2008)
Internal Consistency (Cronbach's Alpha)	0.92 (Excellent reliability) (Spitzer et al., 2006)

Key Research Findings

- The **GAD-7 score of ≥ 10** is **highly accurate** in detecting GAD, with a **sensitivity of 89%** and **specificity of 82%** (Spitzer et al., 2006).
- The **GAD-7 performs well in various populations**, including **primary care, general medical, and psychiatric settings**, as well as among **adolescents, older adults, and individuals with chronic illnesses** (Löwe et al., 2008).
- Although designed for **GAD**, the GAD-7 also **effectively identifies other anxiety disorders**, such as **panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and PTSD** (Kroenke et al., 2007).

Clinical Utility & Limitations

Advantages

- **Brief and Easy to Administer:** Takes **2-3 minutes** to complete.
- **Highly Validated:** Shows **high sensitivity and specificity** for **GAD** and other anxiety disorders.
- **Useful for Symptom Monitoring:** Can track **treatment progress** over time.
- **Validated Across Multiple Settings:** Effective in **primary care, psychiatry, and community samples**.

Limitations

- **Not a Standalone Diagnostic Tool:** Requires **further clinical assessment** for formal **GAD diagnosis**.
- **Overlap with Other Disorders:** May identify **general distress** rather than **specific anxiety disorders**.
- **Potential for False Positives:** Some individuals with **high scores** may not meet full **DSM-5 criteria for GAD**.

References

1. **Spitzer RL, Kroenke K, Williams JB, Löwe B.** A brief measure for assessing generalized anxiety disorder: the GAD-7. *Arch Intern Med.* 2006 May 22;166(10):1092-7. doi: 10.1001/archinte.166.10.1092. PMID: 16717171.
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3. **Kroenke K, Spitzer RL, Williams JB, Monahan PO, Löwe B.** Anxiety disorders in primary care: prevalence, impairment, comorbidity, and detection. *Ann Intern Med.* 2007 Mar 6;146(5):317-25. doi: 10.7326/0003-4819-146-5-200703060-00004. PMID: 17339617.
4. **Podda J, Ponzio M, Messmer Uccelli M, Pedullà L, Bozzoli F, Molinari F, Monti Bragadin M, Battaglia MA, Zaratini P, Bricchetto G, Tacchino A.** Predictors of clinically significant anxiety in people with multiple sclerosis: A one-year follow-up study. *Mult Scler Relat Disord.* 2020 Oct;45:102417. doi: 10.1016/j.msard.2020.102417. Epub 2020 Jul 22. PMID: 32736214.