

Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5)

Name:

Date:

Sometimes things happen to people that are unusually or especially frightening, horrible, or traumatic.

For example:

- a serious accident or fire
- a physical or sexual assault or abuse
- an earthquake or flood
- seeing someone be killed or seriously injured
- having a loved one die through homicide or suicide

Have you ever experienced this kind of event? YES NO

In the past month have you:

	YES	NO
1. Had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to?		
2. Tried hard not to think about it or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it?		
3. Were constantly on guard, watchful or easily startled?		
4. Felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?		
5. Felt guilty or unable to stop blaming yourself or others for the event or any problems the event may have caused?		

PC-PTSD-5 explanatory notes

Following a traumatic event, a range of psychological symptoms are common. Many of these decrease naturally over time. However, some symptoms are more likely to indicate probable PTSD and should be monitored over time.

Use

The Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5) is a 5-item screen designed to identify individuals with probable PTSD. It was designed by the U.S. National Centre for PTSD for use in a primary care setting.

Scoring and interpretation

The measure begins with an item designed to assess whether the respondent has had any exposure to traumatic events. If a patient denies exposure, allocate a score of zero and do not continue.

If a patient indicates a trauma history, score the five remaining questions, zero (0) for a NO response and one (1) for a YES response.

The PC-PTSD-5 is still undertaking full validation studies. Preliminary results suggest that responding YES to three or more questions indicates probable PTSD. This is the optimally sensitive cut point (minimises false negatives).

Follow-up

Those screening positive for potential PTSD require further assessment, preferably with a structured interview by a mental health professional.

If administration of a clinical interview is not possible, it is recommended that additional assessment is conducted using a validated self-report measure. The PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5; Link provided below) is a psychometrically sound self-report questionnaire that can be used for this purpose.

Further information

- Prins, A., Bovin, M. J., Smolenski, D. J., Mark, B. P., Kimerling, R., Jenkins-Guarnieri, M. A., Kaloupek, D. G., Schnurr, P. P., Pless Kaiser, A., Leyva, Y. E., & Tiet, Q. Q. (2016). [The Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 \(PC-PTSD-5\): Development and evaluation within a Veteran primary care sample](#). *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 31, 1206-1211. doi:10.1007/s11606-016-3703-5
- Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5): <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/screens/pc-ptsd.asp>
- PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5): <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/adult-sr/ptsd-checklist.asp>