



RAPID DIAGNOSIS TOOLKIT

RAPID DIAGNOSIS OF PTSD

In order to present PTSD, your patient must have undergone a traumatic event. The definition of a traumatic event is found in criteria A1 and A2 of the DSM-IV. We shall determine, with the help of the questions that follow, whether or not your patient has been exposed to a traumatic event.

01: Have they ever been subjected to, witness to or been indirectly involved in one or more events that posed a serious physical threat to them or someone else?

- Yes
- No (Your patient has not undergone a traumatic event)

02: What type of event was your patient exposed to?

If your patient reports more than one such event, consider the one that has the greatest impact on them at the moment.

- Natural disaster (tornado; hurricane; fire; earthquake; landslide; tidal wave (Tsunami); flood; other).
- Accident (serious road accident; serious injury or illness; fire; explosion; exposure to a toxic substance; other).
- Externally (Third party) motivated event (childhood abuse or negligence; physical assault; sexual assault; arson; theft; death threats; hostage-taking; war; torture; other).

03: Which of the following responses best reflect your patient's reaction to the event?

- He/She felt intense fear.
- He/She felt totally powerless.
- He/She were horrified.
- He/She experienced more than one of these emotions.
- He/She experienced none of these emotions. (This choice indicates that your patient has not undergone a traumatic event; experiencing at least one of these is required, if the event is to be defined as traumatic.)

04: How long ago was this event?

If the event was repeated or took place over a period of time, reference the moment when it first started.

- Within the past week.
- Within the past month.
- Within the past year.
- More than a year ago.

If you have now determined that your patient has been exposed to a traumatic event, you may use the following test to reach a preliminary diagnosis. In order to refine this diagnosis we suggest that you practice the correct use of the CAPS via McGill University's website on psychological trauma: www.info-trauma.org.

This self-test, called the Impact of Events Scale - Revised (IES-R) has been validated for use, in both English and French. Compiled are 22 problems that people can experience after a traumatic event. The responses will help us to determine whether or not your patient is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.



FOR WHOM IS THE IES-R SUITABLE?

Any adult.

WHAT DOES THE IES-R MEASURE?

It measures the severity of intrusion, avoidance, and hypervigilance symptoms, experienced over the past week.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

Completion: 5 minutes

Scoring: 5 minutes

SCORING

We suggest the following validated method:

Tally the responses as follows:

Not at all = 0; A little bit = 1; Moderately = 2; Quite a bit = 3; Extremely = 4

When you have calculated the total, refer to the score matrix.

INTERPRETATION

An IES-R score between 1-11:

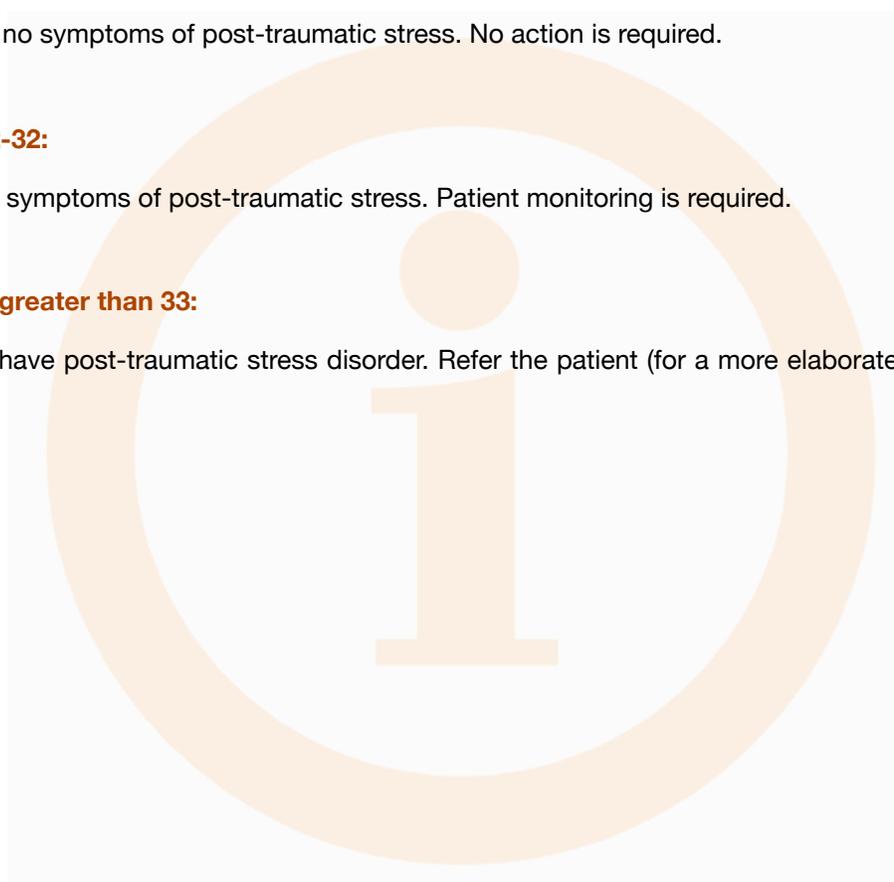
Your patient presents little or no symptoms of post-traumatic stress. No action is required.

An IES-R score between 12-32:

Your patient presents several symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Patient monitoring is required.

An IES-R score equal to or greater than 33:

Most people with this score have post-traumatic stress disorder. Refer the patient (for a more elaborate assessment).



REFERENCES

Weiss, D. (1996). Psychotraumatic review of the Impact of Events Scale – Revised. In B. H. Stamm (Ed.). *Measurement of stress, trauma and adaptation*. Lutherville, MD : Sidan Press.

Brunet A., St-Hilaire, A., Jehel, L., & King, S. (2003). Validation of a French version of the Impact of Event Scale-Revised. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 48*, 56-61.

Creamer, M., Bell, R., & Failla, S. (2003). Psychometric properties of the Impact of Event Scale - Revised. *Behavior Research & Therapy, 41*, 1489-1496.

Weiss, D. S. & Marmar, C. R. (1997). The Impact of Event Scale –Revised. In J. Wilson & T. Keane (Eds), *Assessing psychological trauma and PTSD*, 399-411. New York : Guildford.



APPENDICES

1. IES-R test

2. Symptoms of post-traumatic stress according to DSM-IV



IES-R Test (Weiss & Marmar, 1997)

Below is a list of difficulties people sometimes have after stressful life events. Please read each item, and then indicate how distressing each difficulty has been for you during the past seven days with respect to the event you experienced. How much were you distressed or bothered by these difficulties?

CIRCLE THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES THE DIFFICULTIES YOU HAVE HAD.

	Not at all	A little bit	Mode- rately	Quite a bit	Extre- mely
Any reminder brought back feelings about it.	0	1	2	3	4
I had trouble staying asleep.	0	1	2	3	4
Other things kept making me think about it.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt irritable and angry.	0	1	2	3	4
I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it.	0	1	2	3	4
I thought about it when I didn't mean to.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt as if it hadn't happened or wasn't real.	0	1	2	3	4
I stayed away from reminders about it.	0	1	2	3	4
Images of it popped into my mind.	0	1	2	3	4
I was jumpy and easily startled.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried not to think about it.	0	1	2	3	4
I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn't deal with them.	0	1	2	3	4
My feelings about it were kind of numb.	0	1	2	3	4
I found myself acting or feeling as though I was back at that time.	0	1	2	3	4
I had trouble falling asleep.	0	1	2	3	4
I had waves of strong feelings about it.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried to remove it from my memory.	0	1	2	3	4
I had trouble concentrating.	0	1	2	3	4
Reminders of the event caused physical reactions such as sweating, difficulty in breathing, nausea or palpitations.	0	1	2	3	4
I had dreams about it.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt watchful or on-guard.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried not to talk about it.	0	1	2	3	4

Symptoms of PTSD (DSM-IV)

According to the diagnostic criteria set by the APA in the DSM-IV, in order to determine if your patient has post-traumatic stress disorder they must satisfy various criteria:

- A (Exposure to a traumatic event),
- B (Intrusive symptoms),
- C (Avoidance and numbing symptoms),
- D (Symptoms of increased physiological arousal),
- E (Duration of the disturbance) and
- F (significant distress or impairment).

A: Exposure to a traumatic event

The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:

1. The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved any or all of the following: actual or threatened death; serious injury; or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.
2. The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

B: Intrusive symptoms

The traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in one (or more) of the following ways:

1. Recurrent and intrusive recollections of the event, including: images, thoughts, and/or perceptions.
2. Recurrent distressing dreams of the event.
3. Impressions of reliving the event (including hallucinations and flashbacks, experienced while awake or intoxicated).
4. Intense psychological distress, when exposed to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the event.
5. Physiological reactivity when exposed to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the event.

C: Avoidance and numbing symptoms

Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by at least three of the following:

1. Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, and/or conversations associated with the trauma.
2. Efforts to avoid activities, places, and/or people that arouse recollections of the trauma.
3. Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma.
4. Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.
5. Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.
6. Restricted range of emotional expression.
7. Sense of a 'stunted' future.

D: Symptoms of increased physiological arousal

Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma), as indicated by at least two of the following:

1. Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
2. Irritability or outbursts of anger.
3. Difficulty concentrating.
4. Hypervigilance.
5. Exaggerated startle response.

E: Duration of the disturbance(s) (symptoms in Criteria B, C, and D) is longer than one (1) month.

F: The disturbance causes clinically significant distress and/or impairment in social, occupational, and/or other important areas of functioning.

