

Scoring the PHQ-9 Adolescent (age 12 and up)

Scoring the PHQ-9A is simple and involves reviewing the individual questions, not only the total score.

It screens for major depressive disorder, suicide risk, dysthymia and general depression symptoms.

Suicide risk on the PHQ-9A:

- A positive answer to question 9 as well as the two additional suicide items at the bottom must be followed up by a clinical interview.
- Adolescents can screen negative for depression and screen positive for suicide risk.

Major depressive disorder diagnosis on the PHQ-9A:

- Questions 1 and/or 2 are endorsed as either a “2” or “3.”
- Five or more positive symptoms (positive is defined by a “2” or “3” in questions 1 – 8 and by a “1,” “2” or “3” in question 9).
- The functional impairment question (“How difficult...”) needs to be rated at least as “somewhat difficult.”
- The above are correlated to the DSM 5 criteria for MDD.
- A total PHQ-9A score ≥ 10 has a good sensitivity and specificity for MDD. (See below for instructions on how to obtain a total score.)

All types of depression on PHQ-9A:

- All positive answers (positive is defined by a “2” or “3” in questions 1 – 8 and by a “1,” “2” or “3” in question 9) should be followed up by clinical interview.

Dysthymia diagnosis on the PHQ-9A:

- The dysthymia question (“In the past year...”) should be endorsed as “yes.”

To assess severity of depression obtain a total score:

- Add up the numbers endorsed for questions 1 – 9.

<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Depression Severity</u>
0 – 4	No or minimal depression
5 – 9	Mild depression
10 – 14	Moderate depression
15 – 19	Moderately severe depression
20 – 27	Severe depression