The Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2) - Overview

The PHQ-2 inquires about the frequency of depressed mood and anhedonia over the past two weeks. The PHQ-2 includes the first two items of the PHQ-9.

- The purpose of the PHQ-2 is not to establish final a diagnosis or to monitor depression severity, but rather to screen for depression in a "first step" approach.
- Patients who screen positive should be further evaluated with the PHQ-9 to determine whether they meet criteria for a depressive disorder.

Clinical Utility

Reducing depression evaluation to two screening questions enhances routine inquiry about the most prevalent and treatable mental disorder in primary care.

Scoring

A PHQ-2 score ranges from 0-6. The authors[1] identified a PHQ-2 cutoff score of 3 as the optimal cut point for screening purposes and stated that a cut point of 2 would enhance sensitivity, whereas a cut point of 4 would improve specificity.

Psychometric Properties[1]

Major Depressive Disorder (7% prevalence)				Any Depressive Disorder (18% prevalence)			
PHQ-2 Score	Sensitivity	Specificity	Positive Predictive Value (PPV*)	PHQ-2 Score	Sensitivity	Specificity	Positive Predictive Value (PPV*)
1	97.6	59.2	15.4	1	90.6	65.4	36.9
2	92.7	73.7	21.1	2	82.1	80.4	48.3
3	**82.9**	**90.0**	**38.4**	**3**	**62.3**	**95.4**	**75.0**
4	73.2	93.3	45.5	4	50.9	97.9	81.2
5	53.7	96.8	56.4	5	31.1	98.7	84.6
6	26.8	99.4	78.6	6	12.3	99.8	92.9

* Because the PPV varies with the prevalence of depression, the PPV will be higher in settings with a higher prevalence of depression and lower in settings with a lower prevalence.

1. Kroenke K, Spitzer RL, Williams JB. The Patient Health Questionnaire-2: Validity of a Two-Item Depression Screener. Medical Care 2003, (41) 1284-1294.

The Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)

Patient Name _____ Date of Visit _____

Over the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	Not At all	Several Days	More Than Half the Days	Nearly Every Day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed or hopeless	0	1	2	3