Quick Guide for Primary Care

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCREENING & INTERVENTION

Your patient’s complaint may relate to a psychiatric issue rather than a physical one.

Start Screening

What You Need to Know
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicide

Next Steps
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicide

Resources & Referral

This document serves as a resource guide. This material is not intended to function as a standard of care, nor does it include every acceptable approach. Evidence-based protocols/interventions for validated screening instruments should be utilized.
START SCREENING

Visit [ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html](ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html) for essential resources related to behavioral health screening and intervention.

- Screening tools and protocols
- Local behavioral health referral
- Billing guides
- Patient materials
- Research and news
- Industry recommendations
- Primary care widgets for preventive screening

**Receive free screening consultation:**

- Go to [ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html](ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html)
- Email [sbirt@odmhsas.org](mailto:sbirt@odmhsas.org)
- Call 1-877-SBIRTOK (1-877-724-7865)

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**Billing & Coding**

A long list of preventative services including alcohol counseling and depression screening for patients is covered by private insurance and, in most cases, without co-pays or coinsurance. In addition, Medicare reimburses for preventative screening and counseling, and SoonerCare covers tobacco cessation and screening for behavioral health symptoms, substance misuse and abuse. Please visit [ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html](ok.gov/odmhsas/Prevention_in_Practice.html) for more information.
Substance use disorders are associated with significant morbidity and mortality worldwide. Patients with alcohol/drug problems frequently present in primary care.\(^1\) Alcohol problems are overrepresented in many populations seeking medical care, affecting up to 44%\(^2\) of primary care patients.

In addition to alcohol and illicit drug use, nonmedical use of prescription drugs is also common in the primary care setting.\(^3\) “In 2007, 16.3 million Americans age 12 and older had taken a prescription pain reliever, tranquilizer, stimulant, or sedative for nonmedical purposes at least once in the past year—behaviors that can lead to serious health problems, including addiction,” according to Dr. Galson, a rear admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service.

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**Signs/Symptoms**

- High blood pressure
- Red palms, flushed face
- Enlarged liver
- Nausea, bloating, dyspepsia, and ulcers
- Pancreatitis
- Easy bruising and/or bleeding
- Shakiness, tremor
- Weakness of the wrists, ankles
- Numbness and tingling
- Impaired memory
- Erectile dysfunction
- Yellowing of the whites of eyes or skin (jaundice)

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1. Treating substance abuse in primary care: a demonstration project Denise Ernst, MA, MS, William R. Miller, PhD, and Stephen Rollnick, PhD
3. A Single-Question Screening Test for Drug Use in Primary Care Peter C. Smith, MD, MSc, Susan M. Schmidt, Donald Allensworth-Davies, MSc, and Richard Saitz, MD, MPH.
Primary care doctors carrying heavier mental health load, more than a third of patients rely solely on them to treat psychiatric conditions as the number of psychiatrists fails to keep pace with demand. Nearly one in 10 Americans 18 and older is depressed, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study in the Oct. 1 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. One in four adults has a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Depressive disorders affect approximately 18.8 million adults or 9.5% of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year. This includes major depressive disorder, dysthymic disorder, and bipolar disorder.

Signs/Symptoms
- Feelings of sadness or unhappiness
- Irritability or frustration, even over small matters
- Loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities
- Reduced sex drive
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Changes in appetite
- Agitation or restlessness
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements
- Indecisiveness, distractibility and decreased concentration
- Fatigue, tiredness and loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures
- Frequent thoughts of death, dying or suicide
- Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches.

5 NiMH. “The Numbers Count: Mental Illness in America,” Science on Our Minds Fact Sheet Serie
In any given year, 18% of people will suffer from an anxiety disorder. The majority of these individuals receive treatment in general medical rather than specialty mental health settings.

**Signs/Symptoms**
- Bothered by nerves, feeling anxious, or on edge
- Anxious or uncomfortable around people
- Spells or attacks where all of a sudden feels frightened, anxious, or uneasy
- Recurrent dreams or nightmares of trauma, or avoidance of trauma reminders

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SUICIDE

Since physical illness itself is a risk factor for suicide, primary care physicians and other health care providers are highly likely to see patients who are depressed and may be at risk of suicide.\(^8\)

Most people who complete suicide signal their intention to do so before ending their lives, and they often display these distress signals to their doctors. A substantial number of elderly people who die by suicide contact their primary care physicians within a month before their death.\(^9\)

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**Signs/Symptoms**

- Talking about suicide or death
- Giving direct verbal cues, such as “I wish I were dead”
- Giving less direct verbal cues, such as “What’s the point of living?”
- Isolating him- or herself from friends and family
- Expressing the belief that life is meaningless or hopeless
- Giving away cherished possessions
- Exhibiting a sudden and unexplained improvement in mood
- Neglecting his or her appearance and hygiene

These signs are especially critical if the patient has a history or current diagnosis of a psychiatric disorder, such as depression, alcohol or drug abuse, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia.

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\(^9\) Contact With Mental Health and Primary Care Providers Before Suicide: A Review of the Evidence, Jason B. Luoma, M.A.; Catherine E. Martin, M.A.; Jane L. Pearson, Ph.D., Am J Psychiatry 2012; 159: 909-916. 10.1176/appi.ajp.159.6.909
## Commonly Used Screening Tools:

**Adolescent:** CRAFFT

**Adult:** Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT)
Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST)

### NEXT STEPS

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<th>Low Risk</th>
<th>Moderate Risk</th>
<th>High Risk</th>
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<td>Discuss results with patient</td>
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<td>Reinforce and educate healthy limits</td>
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<td>Refer to Behavioral Health (See Referral and Resource Section of Guide)</td>
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**Commonly Used Screening Tools:**

**Pediatric:** Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC)

**Adolescent:** 11-Item Kutcher Adolescent Depression Scale (KADS-11)
- Patient Health Questionnaire Modified for Teens (PHQ-9)
- Pediatric Symptom Checklist – Youth (PSC-Y)

**Adult:** Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)

**Older Adult:** Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)

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Call if symptoms worsen

Refer to Behavioral Health

Assess for anti-depressant

Refer to Behavioral Health

(See Referral and Resource Section of Guide)
ANXIETY

Commonly Used Screening Tools:

**Adolescent:** Pediatric Symptom Checklist – Youth (PSC-Y)

**Adult:** Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A)
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item (GAD-7)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Checklist – civilian version
- Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS)

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<td>Call if symptoms worsen</td>
<td>Refer to Behavioral Health (See Referral and Resource Section of Guide)</td>
<td>Assess for psychiatric medication</td>
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**Commonly Used Screening Tools:**

**Adolescent:** Pediatric Symptom Checklist – Youth (PSC-Y)

**Adult:** Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)

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<td>Discuss results with patient</td>
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<td>Keep patient safe (supervised)</td>
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<td>Discuss hospitalization</td>
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<td>If involuntary, call 911 or local police</td>
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<td>If voluntary, secure safe transportation</td>
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Patient Supports and Behavioral Health Referral:

- **211 Oklahoma:**
  www.211oklahoma.org
  Information and referrals to human services for every day needs and in times of crisis.

- **Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator:**
  findtreatment.samhsa.gov/TreatmentLocator/
  Find the Closest Services & Treatment Locations.
  Find alcohol and drug abuse treatment or mental health treatment facilities and programs around the country.

- **SAMHSA’s National Helpline:**
  www.samhsa.gov/treatment/natHelpFAQs.aspx
  1-800-662-HELP (4357)
  TTY: 1-800-487-4889
  Also known as, the Treatment Referral Routing Service, this Helpline provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery in English and Spanish.

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**
  www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
  1-800-273-TALK
  24-hour Assistance for Individuals in Emotional Distress

- **Oklahoma Health Care Authority:**
  www.okhca.org
  (800) 987-7767
  (800) 757-5979 (TDD)
  For SoonerCare eligible customers contact Member Services

Screening in Primary Care for substance abuse and mental health is critical as more than a third of patients rely solely on primary care for treatment.