Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS)

Foa, Cashman. Jaycox, Perry; 1997

Description

The PDS is a 49-item self-report measure recommended for use in clinical or research settings to measure severity of PTSD symptoms related to a single identified traumatic event. The PDS is unique in that it assesses all of the DSM-IV criteria for PTSD (i.e., Criteria A – F) and inquires about the past month (time frame can be adjusted for different uses). Thus, in addition to measuring the severity of PTSD symptoms (Criteria B, C, & D), it also inquires about the experience of a Criterion A traumatic events, about duration of symptoms (Criterion E), and the effects of symptoms on daily functioning (Criterion F).

The PDS has four sections. Part 1 is a trauma checklist. In Part 2, respondents are asked to describe their most upsetting traumatic event. Questions specifically ask about when it happened, if anyone was injured, perceived life threat, and whether the event resulted in helplessness or terror. In Part 3 assesses the 17 PTSD symptoms. Respondents are asked to rate the severity of the symptom from 0 ("not at all or only one time") to 3 ("5 or more times a week / almost always"). Part 4 assesses interference of the symptoms.

The PDS yields a total severity score (ranging from 0 to 51) that largely reflects the frequency of the 17 symptoms of PTSD. A PDS Profile Report also provides a preliminary determination of DSM-IV PTSD diagnostic status, a count of the number of symptoms endorsed, a rating of symptom severity, and a rating of the level of impairment of functioning.

Scoring

A categorical diagnosis of PTSD can be made with an algorithm that requires that the individual's responses meet the following criteria: The traumatic event involves either injury or life threat; the person felt helpless or terrified during the event, endorsement (rating of 1 or higher) of at least one re-experiencing symptom, three avoidance symptoms, and two arousal symptoms; duration of at least one month; and impairment in at least one area of functioning.

Sample Item

"Having upsetting thoughts or images about the traumatic event that came into your head when you didn't want them to."

0 Not at all or only one time
1 Once a week or less/once in a while
2 2 to 4 times a week/half the time
3 5 or more times a week/almost always
Versions

The PSS-SR was the precursor to the PDS. It measured the 17 DSM-III-R PTSD symptoms.

References


Additional Reviews


To obtain scale, contact

National Computer Systems (NCS)
5605 Green Circle Drive
Minnetonka, MN 55343
1-800-627-7271 (ext. 5151)