



Positive Aging Resource Center

CORNELL SCALE FOR DEPRESSION IN DEMENTIA

Ratings should be given based on symptoms and signs occurring during the week before the interview. No score should be given if symptoms result from physical disability or illness.

Scoring

a = Unable to evaluate

0 = Absent

1 = Mild to intermittent

2 = Severe

A. MOOD RELATED SIGNS

1. Anxiety; anxious expression, rumination, worrying
2. Sadness; sad expression, sad voice, tearfulness
3. Lack of reaction to pleasant events
4. Irritability; annoyed, short tempered

a	0	1	2

B. BEHAVIORAL DISTURBANCE

5. Agitation; restlessness, hand ringing, hair pulling
6. Retardation; slow movements, slow speech, slow reactions
7. Multiple physical complaints (*score 0 if gastrointestinal symptoms only*)
8. Loss of interest; less involved in usual activities (*score 0 only if change occurred acutely, i.e., in less than one month*)

a	0	1	2

C. PHYSICAL SIGNS

9. Appetite Loss; eating less than usual
10. Weight loss (*score 2 if greater than 5 pounds in one month*)
11. Lack of energy; fatigues easily, unable to sustain activities

a	0	1	2

D. CYCLIC FUNCTIONS

12. Diurnal variation of mood; symptoms worse in the morning
13. Difficulty falling asleep; later than usual for this individual
14. Multiple awakenings during sleep
15. Early morning awakening; earlier than usual for this individual

a	0	1	2

E. IDEATIONAL DISTURBANCE

- 16. Suicidal; feels life is not worth living
- 17. Poor self-esteem; self-blame; self-depreciation, feelings of failure
- 18. Pessimism; anticipation of the worst
- 19. Mood congruent delusions; delusions of poverty, illness or loss

a	0	1	2

Score

SCORING

Score greater than 12 = Probable Depression

Alexopoulos, GS; Abrams; Young, RC; and Shamoian, CA. Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia. *Biol Psychiatry*. 1988. 23: 271-284.

Sharp, LK and Lipsky, MS. Screening for Depression across the lifespan: A review of measures for use in primary care settings. *Am. Fam. Physician* 2002. 66 (6): 1001-1008.

