

Head-to-Toe Physical Examination as It Relates to Mental Health/Illness

SYSTEM	ABNORMAL FINDINGS/RATIONALE
General Health Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Poor grooming and personal hygiene</i>: Associated with depression ■ <i>Bright colors or unusual dress</i>: Associated with mania ■ <i>Poor eye contact</i>: May indicate depression ■ <i>Inability to maintain attention</i>: Associated with schizophrenia and depression ■ <i>Labile affect</i>: May reflect mania ■ <i>Flat, incongruent affect</i>: May reflect schizophrenia ■ <i>Stooped posture</i>: Associated with depression ■ <i>Restlessness, tension</i>: Associated with anxiety ■ <i>Malnourished appearance</i>: May indicate an eating disorder ■ <i>Slurred speech</i>: May indicate drug and alcohol abuse ■ <i>Pressured speech</i>: Seen with mania ■ <i>Disorganized speech</i>: Seen with schizophrenia ■ <i>Irritability</i>: Associated with anxiety ■ <i>Suspiciousness</i>: Associated with paranoia
Integumentary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Flushed or pallid skin color</i>: Seen with anxiety ■ <i>Excessive sweating</i>: Seen with anxiety ■ <i>Injury or scarring</i>: From self-injury or past suicide attempts or self-mutilation
HEENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Dilated or constricted pupils</i>: Seen with drug abuse ■ <i>Poor eye contact</i>: Seen with depression ■ <i>Dental caries, parotid swelling</i>: Seen with eating disorders ■ <i>Erosion of nasal or oral mucosa</i>: May be secondary to drug use ■ <i>Rope marks on neck</i>: In children, associated with "choking game"
Respiratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Increased respiratory rate and hyperventilation</i>: Seen with anxiety
Cardiovascular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Increased pulse rate and blood pressure</i>: Seen with anxiety
Abdominal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Increased bowel sounds</i>: Seen with excessive use of laxatives in eating disorders
Musculoskeletal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Abnormal liver size</i>: Associated with substance abuse ■ <i>Generalized weakness and tremors</i>: Seen with anxiety ■ <i>Abnormal muscle movement</i>: May be adverse effect of psychotropic drugs ■ <i>Excessive body movements</i>: Associated with anxiety, mania, or stimulant abuse ■ <i>Minimal or no body movement</i>: Associated with depression, catatonic states, or drug-induced stupor ■ <i>Repeated movements</i>: Associated with compulsive disorders ■ <i>Repeated picking at clothes</i>: May be associated with hallucinations, delirium, or toxic conditions
Neurological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Cognitive changes, thought process disorders</i>: Seen with schizophrenia ■ <i>Loose association</i>: Associated with schizophrenia ■ <i>Flight of ideas</i>: Associated with mania ■ <i>Perseveration</i>: Associated with brain damage and psychotic disorders ■ <i>Auditory hallucinations</i>: Associated with schizophrenia ■ <i>Visual hallucinations</i>: Often organic in nature ■ <i>Tactile hallucinations</i>: Seen with organic problems, drug abuse, or delirium tremens (DTs) ■ <i>Changes in mental status</i>: Seen with mental illness such as schizophrenia, substance abuse, bipolar disorder ■ <i>Increased reflexes</i>: Seen with anxiety ■ <i>Movement disorders</i>: Adverse effect associated with antipsychotic medications

Mental Status Assessment as It Relates to Mental Health/Illness (continued)

AREA/QUESTIONS TO ASK	NORMAL	ABNORMAL FINDINGS/RATIONALE
<p>Thought Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the patient's content of thought make sense and seem reality based? ■ Does the patient have thoughts about hurting self or someone else? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thought content (what the patient is thinking) reality based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Tangentiality</i>: Digresses from topic to topic, never getting to the point ■ <i>Loose association</i>: Loose connection between thoughts that are unrelated ■ <i>Echolalia</i>: Repetition of words spoken by another ■ <i>Flight of ideas</i>: Rapidly going from one topic to another ■ <i>Perseveration</i>: Involuntary, excessive repetition of a single response to different questions ■ <i>Clang association</i>: Association of words by sound ■ <i>Blocking</i>: Draws a blank ■ <i>Word salad</i>: Combination of words that have no meaning ■ <i>Derailment</i>: Off track ■ <i>Delusions (grandiose/persecution/reference/somatic)</i>: Associated with psychosis ■ <i>Suicidal/homicidal thoughts</i>: Associated with depression, anxiety, or schizophrenia ■ <i>Obsessions</i>: Seen with OCD
<p>Perceptual Disturbances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the patient have perceptual disturbances? Auditory disturbances? Visual disturbances? Olfactory disturbances? Tactile disturbances? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No hallucinations, illusions, or depersonalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Paranoia</i>: Seen with schizophrenia ■ <i>Phobias</i>: Seen with anxiety disorders ■ <i>Magical thinking</i> (primitive form of thinking that thinking about something will make it happen) ■ Poverty of speech ■ <i>Visual hallucinations</i>: Often organic in nature ■ <i>Auditory hallucinations (commenting/discussing/commanding/loud/soft/other)</i>: Associated with schizophrenia ■ <i>Tactile hallucinations</i>: Seen with organic problems, drug abuse, or DTs ■ <i>Illusions (misperception of a real external stimulus)</i>: Common with dementia of Alzheimer's and schizophrenia



ALERT

If the patient is having homicidal thoughts, identify those toward whom those thoughts are directed.

Assessment of Common Mental Health Problems

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER

Anxiety

- Diffuse feelings of apprehension with feelings of uncertainty, helplessness
- Ranges from mild to panic state that can be paralyzing



HELPFUL HINT

Anxiety differs from fear in that fear has an identifiable source, anxiety may not.

Types: (DSM-IV)

Panic Disorders

- Extreme, overwhelming anxiety in response to real or perceived life-threatening situation
- Can lead to phobias, avoidance, and agoraphobia

Phobias

- Unreasonable fear response to a specific object or situation
- Causes anxiety
- Person realizes fear is unreasonable

Social Anxiety Disorder

- Fear of social or performance situations that may cause embarrassment

OCD

- Recurrent thought or ideas (obsession)
- Action person cannot refrain from doing (compulsion)
- Obsession and compulsion interfere with social and occupational functioning
- Recognizes thoughts and behaviors are unreasonable

PTSD

- Traumatic event
- Threat of harm or death, actual death, and helplessness
- Re-experiences event (flashback)
- Hypervigilant
- Recurring nightmares
- Anniversary reactions related to trauma
- Persistent anxiety
- Acute < 3 mo, chronic > 3 mo, delayed > 6 mo

Acute Stress Disorder

Anxiety, dissociation, and other symptoms after exposure to recent stressors

Anxiety Disorder related to Medical Condition

Generalized anxiety disorder

- Excessive worry and anxiety for at least 6 mo
- Difficult to control worry
- Hypervigilant

Substance-induced anxiety

ASSESS FOR

- Restlessness
- On edge
- Easily fatigued
- Concentration problems
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbances
- Dizziness
- Palpitations
- Hot/cold flashes
- Tightness of chest
- Nausea
- Decreased appetite
- Abdominal pain

Affect

- Nervous
- Anxious
- Fearful

Physical Findings

- Sweating
- Tremors, rigidity, spasms
- Dilated pupils
- Increased respirations
- Wheezes due to bronchial spasms
- Tachycardia, increased blood pressure
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Increased reflexes
- Muscle tension
- Pacing, clumsy movements
- Confusion
- Easily distracted
- Short attention span

(continued)

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER

- Loose Association
- Autistic thoughts
- Ambivalence

Mood Disorders

- Extremes of moods (mania or depression)

Types

Depressive

- *Major depressive disorder (unipolar depression)*: At least 2 wk of depression/loss of interest and four additional symptoms with one or more major depressive episodes.
- *Dysthymic disorder*: On-going, low-grade depression of at least 2 years' duration for more days than not and does not meet the criteria for major depression
- *Depressive disorder not otherwise specified (NOS)*: Does not meet criteria for depressions described above.

Bipolar Disorders

- *Bipolar I disorder*: One or more manic or mixed episodes with a major depressive episode
- *Bipolar II disorder*: One or two major depressive episodes and at least one hypomanic episode
- *Cyclothymic disorder*: At least 2 years of hypomanic episodes that do not meet the criteria for other disorders
- *Bipolar disorder NOS*: Does not meet any of the other bipolar criteria

Eating Disorders

Types

Anorexia Nervosa

- Terrified of gaining weight

ASSESS FOR

Negative Symptoms = Deficits in behavior, such as reduced function or self-care deficits

At least for 1 mo, two or more:

- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- Disorganized speech
- Disorganized behavior
- Negative symptoms
- Functional disturbances at work or school disturbance continues for 6 mo



HELPFUL HINT

- Auditory hallucinations usually begin distant and soft, then become louder, but become softer and distant as client's condition improves.
- In North America, most hallucinations are auditory. Not likely to have both auditory and visual together.

Depressive

Depressed mood or loss of interest for at least 2 wk and five or more of:

- weight loss/gain
- insomnia or hypersomnia
- psychomotor agitation or retardation
- fatigue
- worthless feelings or inappropriate guilt
- problem concentrating
- recurrent thoughts of death



ALERT

When working with patients who have depression, it is important to identify any suicidal/homicidal ideations.

Mania

Persistent elevated, irritable mood for 1 wk or more, plus three or more (irritable, four or more):

- high self-esteem
- decreased sleep
- increased talking/pressured speech
- racing thoughts/flight of ideas
- distractibility
- extreme goal-directed activity
- excessive buying/sex/business investments (painful consequences)

Anorexia Nervosa

- Emaciated appearance
- Below normal weight
- Hair loss, dry skin

(continued)