

Information Handout

Professional Version | US English

Recognizing Panic Attacks And Panic Disorder



Description

Psychiatric diagnostic frameworks serve multiple purposes. Classification of mental disorders enables clinicians and researchers to speak a common language when describing patterns of experience and behavior, guides appropriate treatment interventions, and acts as a coding system for insurance purposes. The success of these classification frameworks has varied across diagnoses but in the best cases has led to improved understanding and treatment of conditions, and has helped many service users who find such classification helpful (Perkins et al, 2018).

Diagnostic frameworks are not without controversy. They have been criticized on grounds of reliability, validity, and distortions due to commercial interests (Zigler & Phillips, 1961; Frances & Widiger, 2012; Bell, 2017). Perhaps most importantly there are instances where they have had, and continue to have, extremely negative effects upon service users (Perkins et al, 2018). Diagnosis is not the only way of understanding people and their experiences. Many clinicians and their clients find that attending to our personal stories and narratives is a helpful approach, and psychological formulation is one technique for bringing together information about what has happened to an individual and the sense that they have made of it (British Psychological Society, 2018).

Notwithstanding the above caveats, the '*Recognizing...*' series from Psychology Tools is designed to aid clinicians' understanding of the similarities and differences in the way that the two primary psychiatric diagnostic systems classify mental health problems. Their formatting for aid of comparison means that some detail has been purposefully excluded, and clinicians are encouraged to refer to the original source material for formal diagnostic purposes.

Panic attacks are characterized by sudden surges of intense fear or discomfort, and panic disorder is characterized by recurrent panic attacks. *Recognizing Panic Attacks and Panic Disorder* compares the DSM-5 and ICD-10 criteria for panic and the *Panic Attacks and Panic Disorder Checklist* is an assessment tool for clinicians.

Instructions

The 'Recognizing...' series from Psychology Tools is designed to aid clinicians' understanding of the similarities and differences in the way that the two primary psychiatric diagnostic systems classify mental health problems.

Their formatting for aid of comparison means that some detail has been purposefully excluded, and clinicians are encouraged to refer to the original source material for formal diagnostic purposes. In particular it has been assumed that symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment unless otherwise stated.

Information for the 'Recognizing ...' series was drawn from:

- The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)*.
- The *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10)*. The ICD-10 is available in two versions: (1) The Clinical Descriptions and Diagnostic Guidelines (CDDG) or 'blue book' is intended for general clinical, educational and service use; (2) The Diagnostic Criteria for Research (DCR) or 'green book' was designed to facilitate research.

References

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-5®)*. American Psychiatric Pub.

Bell, V. (2017). *We need to get better at critiquing psychiatric diagnosis*. Retrieved from <https://mindhacks.com/2017/09/19/why-we-need-to-get-better-at-critiquing-diagnosis/>

British Psychological Society (2018). *Understanding psychiatric diagnosis in adult mental health*. Retrieved from: <https://www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/user-files/Division%20of%20Clinical%20Psychology/public/DCP%20Diagnosis.pdf>

Frances, A. J., & Widiger, T. (2012). Psychiatric diagnosis: lessons from the DSM-IV past and cautions for the DSM-5 future. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 8, 109-130.

Perkins, A., Ridler, J., Browes, D., Peryer, G., Notley, C., & Hackmann, C. (2018). Experiencing mental health diagnosis: a systematic review of service user, clinician, and carer perspectives across clinical settings. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 5(9), 747-764.

World Health Organization. (1992). *The ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders: clinical descriptions and diagnostic guidelines*. Geneva, World Health Organization.

World Health Organization. (1993). *The ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders: diagnostic criteria for research*. Geneva, World Health Organization.

Zigler, E., & Phillips, L. (1961). Psychiatric diagnosis: A critique. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 63(3), 607.

Recognizing Panic Attacks And Panic Disorder

	DSM-5	ICD-10
Panic attack symptoms	5 of:*	5 of:†
1. Abrupt surge of intense fear or discomfort that reaches a crescendo within a few minutes	✓	✓
2. Palpitations or pounding heart, or an accelerated heart rate	✓	✓
3. Sweating	✓	✓
4. Trembling or shaking	✓	✓
5. Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath	✓	✓
6. Feelings of choking	✓	✓
7. Chest pain or discomfort	✓	✓
8. Nausea or abdominal distress (churning in stomach)	✓	✓
9. Feeling dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded, or faint	✓	✓
10. Derealization or depersonalization	✓	✓
11. Fear of losing control, going crazy, or passing out	✓	✓
12. Fear of dying	✓	✓
13. Hot flushes or cold chills	✓	✓
14. Paresthesia (numbness or tingling sensations)	✓	✓
15. Dry mouth (not due to medication or dehydration)		✓

*DSM: symptom 1 must be present with four or more symptoms from 2 - 14.

†ICD: symptom 1 must be present with four or more symptoms from 2 - 15.

	2 of:*	1 of:
Panic disorder symptoms		
1. Recurrent panic attacks.	✓	✓
2. Persistent concern about additional panic attacks at least 1 month after a panic attack.	✓	
3. A maladaptive change in behavior at least 1 month after a panic attack (e.g. avoidance).	✓	

*DSM: symptom 1 must be present and either symptoms 2 or 3 or both.

Panic Attacks And Panic Disorder Checklist

	DSM-5	ICD-10
Panic attack symptoms	5 of:*	5 of:†
1. Abrupt surge of intense fear or discomfort that reaches a crescendo within a few minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Palpitations or pounding heart, or an accelerated heart rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sweating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Trembling or shaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Feelings of choking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Chest pain or discomfort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Nausea or abdominal distress (churning in stomach)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Feeling dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded, or faint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Derealization or depersonalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Fear of losing control, going crazy, or passing out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Fear of dying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Hot flushes or cold chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Paresthesia (numbness or tingling sensations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Dry mouth (not due to medication or dehydration)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*DSM: symptom 1 must be present with four or more symptoms from 2 - 14.

†ICD: symptom 1 must be present with four or more symptoms from 2 - 15.

	2 of:*	1 of:
Panic disorder symptoms		
1. Recurrent panic attacks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Persistent concern about additional panic attacks at least 1 month after a panic attack.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A maladaptive change in behavior at least 1 month after a panic attack (e.g. avoidance).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*DSM: symptom 1 must be present and either symptoms 2 or 3 or both.

Psychology Tools develops and publishes evidence-based psychotherapy resources. We support mental health professionals to deliver effective therapy, whatever their theoretical orientation or level of experience.

Our digital library encompasses information handouts, worksheets, workbooks, exercises, guides, and audio skills-development resources.

Our tools are flexible enough to be used both in-session and between-session, and during all stages of assessment, formulation, and intervention. Written by highly qualified clinicians and academics, materials are available in digital and printable formats across a wide range of languages.



Resource details

Title: Recognizing Panic Attacks And Panic Disorder
 Type: Information Handout
 Language: English (US)
 Translated title: Recognizing Panic Attacks And Panic Disorder

URL: <https://www.psychologytools.com/resource/recognizing-panic-attacks-and-panic-disorder>
 Resource format: Professional
 Version: 20230721
 Last updated by: JP

Terms & conditions

This resource may be used by licensed members of Psychology Tools and their clients. Resources must be used in accordance with our terms and conditions which can be found at: <https://www.psychologytools.com/terms-and-conditions/>

Disclaimer

Your use of this resource is not intended to be, and should not be relied on, as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are suffering from any mental health issues we recommend that you seek formal medical advice before using these resources. We make no warranties that this information is correct, complete, reliable or suitable for any purpose. As a professional user, you should work within the bounds of your own competencies, using your own skill and knowledge, and therefore the resources should be used to support good practice, not to replace it.

Copyright

Unless otherwise stated, this resource is Copyright © 2023 Psychology Tools Limited. All rights reserved.