

# Patient Health Questionnaire Interpretation for Adolescents

The **patient health questionnaire** interpretation for adolescents is a crucial tool used to assess mental health symptoms effectively. It helps healthcare providers identify potential concerns such as depression or anxiety in young patients. Accurate interpretation ensures timely intervention and better support for adolescent well-being.

## Interpretation Guide

1. **Score Ranges:**
  - 0-4: Minimal or no symptoms
  - 5-9: Mild symptoms
  - 10-14: Moderate symptoms
  - 15-19: Moderately severe symptoms
  - 20-27: Severe symptoms
2. **Clinical Considerations:**
  - **Minimal symptoms:** Educate and monitor; no active intervention generally needed.
  - **Mild to moderate symptoms:** Consider brief interventions, further evaluation, and discussion with family/caregivers.
  - **Moderately severe to severe symptoms:** Recommend further assessment, possible referral to mental health specialists, safety planning for suicidality as needed.
3. **Red Flags:** Immediate action is warranted if there are concerns of self-harm, severe withdrawal, or functional impairment.

## Best Practices

- Interpret scores in context of the adolescent's overall clinical presentation.
- Engage the patient in open conversation regarding their responses.
- Ensure confidentiality and provide a supportive environment to encourage honest answers.

## References

- Kroenke K, Spitzer RL, Williams JB, et al. The PHQ-9: Validity of a brief depression severity measure. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2001.
- American Academy of Pediatrics. Guidelines for Adolescent Depression in Primary Care (GLAD-PC).