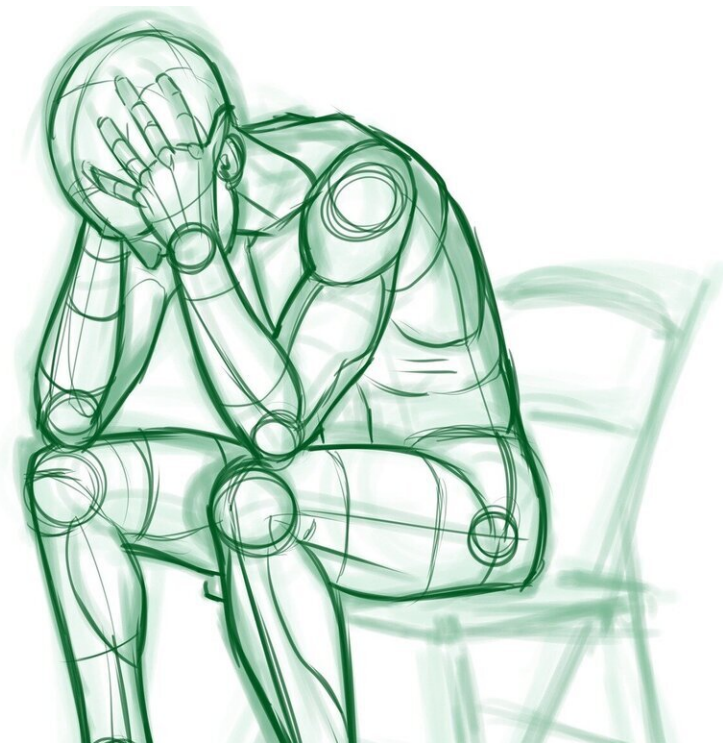


# Newer depression screeners successfully measure symptoms and follow progress of treatment

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Depression is the second most disabling condition in the world, after pain, so screening and diagnosis are crucial to improving outcomes for patients, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research from

Regenstrief Institute and Indiana University School of Medicine shows that the Patient Reported Outcomes Measurement Information Systems (PROMIS) scale for depression developed by the National Institutes of Health accurately measures depression symptoms and severity.

"Depression is treatable, that's why [routine screening](#) is strongly recommended," said study lead author Kurt Kroenke, M.D., Regenstrief research scientist and IU School of Medicine professor of medicine.

"Measurement-based care is important to track a patient's progress in order to make adjustments to care when needed. This study found that the PROMIS scales are an accurate measure of [depression](#) to aid in diagnosis and treatment."

The research team analyzed data from three randomized clinical trials involving about 650 patients. It compared the results of the PROMIS scale, which is a survey where patients report their symptoms, to the results of a structured psychiatric interview. They also compared the diagnostic performance of the PROMIS scale and Patient Health Questionnaire nine-item depression [scale](#) (PHQ-9), which has been validated and widely adopted around the world, to benchmark the PROMIS measures. The PHQ-9 was developed by Dr. Kroenke.

Data analysis showed that PROMIS and PHQ-9 depression scales have similar accuracy when diagnosing depression.

"PROMIS scales are already commonly in use, and both PROMIS and PHQ scales are accessible and free in the public domain. This research supports both as viable [screening](#) options," said Dr. Kroenke.

"The pandemic has taken a substantial toll on mental health, and there will likely be a lingering effect. Screening has become all the more important because we must be able to diagnose and treat patients who are suffering. Monitoring depression is no different than monitoring

blood pressure, so these scales are important tools that are proven to work."

The paper, "Diagnostic operating characteristics of PROMIS scales in screening for depression," was published in the August 2021 print issue of the *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*.

**More information:** Kurt Kroenke et al, Diagnostic operating characteristics of PROMIS scales in screening for depression, *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jpsychores.2021.110532](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2021.110532)

Provided by Regenstrief Institute

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