

Penn Alcohol Craving Scale (PACS)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The PACS is a five-item self-administered instrument for assessing craving. Frequency, intensity, and duration of thoughts about drinking are assessed along with ability to resist drinking. The final item asks the responder to provide an average rating of his/her craving over the course of the past week. The questions on the PACS use descriptors coupled with numerical ratings ranging from 0 to 6.

TARGET POPULATION

- Adults
- Adolescents (over 16 years) *Has not been used in this population but would be appropriate.*

Groups for which this instrument might be especially helpful?

The PACS has been used within the context of pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy alcoholism treatment trials. However, it would also be useful in clinical practice.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Number of items: 5

Number of subscales: 0

- Format(s):
- Pencil-and-paper self-administered
 - Interview (structured)
 - Observation
 - Computer self-administered (in COMBINE)
 - Other

Time required for administration: *1 to 2 minutes*

Administered by: *Self*

Training required for administration? yes no

SCORING

Time required to score/interpret: *1 minute*

Scored by: *Study staff or clinician*

Scoring key? yes no

Computerized scoring or interpretation available? yes no

Norms available? yes no

Instrument normed on subgroups? yes no

Comments: *The PACS is currently being used in COMBINE (two medications—naltrexone and acamprosate—and two behavioral interventions) by 5 of the 11 sites as an ancillary study to the main trial. It is a part of the assessment battery of studies using naltrexone, naltrexone and disulfiram, and naltrexone and sertraline at the University of Pennsylvania's Treatment Research Center and the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center. These studies involve different populations such as alcohol-dependent-only individuals, parolees with alcohol dependence, and individuals dually diagnosed with alcohol dependence and PTSD, alcohol dependence and depression, and alcohol and cocaine dependence. These data are not yet available.*

PSYCHOMETRICS

Have reliability studies been done? yes no

What measure(s) of reliability was used?

Test-retest

Split half

Internal consistency

Have validity studies been done? yes no

What measures of validity have been derived?

Content

Criterion (predictive, concurrent, "postdictive")

Construct

CLINICAL UTILITY OF INSTRUMENT

The PACS could be a useful clinical tool for practitioners to gauge the extent to which their client's drinking is preceded by craving. With such information, therapists could provide strategies for their clients to cope with craving and to break the cycle of craving and drinking.

RESEARCH APPLICABILITY

The PACA has been used as a research assessment within the context of alcoholism treatment trials to examine the relationship between self-reported craving and subsequent drinking and to explore the effect of medication on craving.

SOURCE, COST AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES Copyright: yes no
Cost: None
Source: *Copyright held by the journal, Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research.*
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SOURCE REFERENCE Flannery, B.A., Volpicelli, J.R. & Pettinati, H.M. (1999). Psychometric properties of the Penn Alcohol Craving Scale. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 23(8), 1289-1295.

SUPPORTING REFERENCES Flannery, B.A., Allen, J.P., Pettinati, H.M., Rohsenow, D.J., Cisler, R.A. & Litten, R.Z. (2002). Using acquired knowledge and new technologies in alcohol treatment trials. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 26(3), 423-429.

Flannery, B.A., Roberts, A.J., Cooney, N.L., Swift, R.M., Anton, R.F. & Rohsenow, D.J. (2001). The role of craving in alcohol use, dependence and treatment. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 25(2), 299-308.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE VERSIONS AND HOW TO OBTAIN

The PACS has been translated into Korean and Russian.
Presently, there are no foreign language references available.

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