

Drug Abuse Screening Test 10 (DAST-10): description, strengths and knowledge gaps^[1]

Purpose

The Drug Abuse Screening Test – ten item (DAST-10) screens for drug-related problems, excluding alcohol.^[2]

Drug(s) of Concern

- Any drug except alcohol

Time-frame(s) of Interest

- Recent (last 12 months)

Populations Tested

- Males & females^[2,3]
- Young people^[4]
- Mental health conditions^[3]

Settings Tested

- AOD specialist services^[2]
- General hospital^[5]
- Emergency departments^[3]
- Psychiatric^[3,6]

Diagnostics

Utility: ✓ Brief, easy to administer and score^[7]

Psychometric properties:

- Moderate to high levels of:
 - Test-retest and internal reliability
 - Validity, sensitivity and specificity^[4]

Drug Abuse Screening Test 10 (DAST-10)

Please tick (✓) one box for each question

Q1	Have you used drugs other than those required for medical reasons?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q2	Do you use more than one drug at a time?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q3	Are you always able to stop using drugs when you want to?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 0	No <input type="checkbox"/> 1
Q4	Have you had "blackouts" or "flashbacks" as a result of drug use?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q5	Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q6	Does your spouse (or parents) ever complain about your involvement with drugs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q7	Have you neglected your family because of your use of drugs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q7	Have you engaged in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q9	Have you ever experienced withdrawal symptoms (felt sick) when you stopped taking drugs?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0
Q10	Have you had medical problems as a result of your drug use (e.g., memory loss, hepatitis, convulsions, bleeding, etc.)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 0

Total score:

Administrator, Rater, Scoring and Interpretation

Administrator: Clinician/Worker
Client self-complete

Rater: Client

Scoring & interpretation: The DAST-10 comprises ten questions. All ten questions are scored 'yes' or 'no'.

Score 1 point for each question answered "Yes," except for question 3 for which a "No" receives 1 point.

A total score is calculated by summing the points obtained for each DAST-10 question. The minimum total score possible is 0, and the maximum total score possible is 10 (i.e. total score range: 0-10).

DAST-10 score interpretation^[4]

Score	Interpretation
0	No problems
1-2	Low level of problems
3-5	Likely to meet DSM criteria
6-8	'Substantial' dependence
9-10	'Severe' dependence

Resources

Tool citation: Skinner, H.A. *The Drug Abuse Screening Test*. *Addictive Behaviors*, 1982. 7(4): 363-371.^[2]

Copyright: May be downloaded and used with appropriate citation.

Training/manual: None found.

Brief intervention: None found.

Other: Skinner, H.A. *Guide for using the Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST)*. 1982, Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. <http://www.bcbst.com/docs/providers/Behavioral-health-toolkit/dast-10.pdf>.

Knowledge Gaps

The DAST-10 is a modified version of the DAST-20. The DAST-10 became available in 1982.^[2] How well the DAST-10 accords with DSM-5 criteria is uncertain.

Within an Australian context, few studies have examined DAST-10 content and construct validity or tool acceptance by administrators and raters.

References

1. Fischer, J.A., Roche, A.M., and Duraisingam, V. *Drug Abuse Screening Test 10 (DAST-10): description, strengths and knowledge gaps*. 2021, National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University: Adelaide, South Australia. (overview citation)
2. Skinner, H.A. *The Drug Abuse Screening Test*. *Addictive Behaviors*, 1982. 7(4): 363-371.
3. Giguère, C.É., Potvin, S., and Consortium, S. *The Drug Abuse Screening Test preserves its excellent psychometric properties in psychiatric patients evaluated in an emergency setting*. *Addictive Behaviors*, 2017. 64: 165-170.
4. Yudko, E., Lozhkina, O., and Fouts, A. *A comprehensive review of the psychometric properties of the Drug Abuse Screening Test*. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 2007. 32(2): 189-198.
5. Mdege, N.D. and Lang, J. *Screening instruments for detecting illicit drug use/abuse that could be useful in general hospital wards: a systematic review*. *Addictive Behaviors*, 2011. 36(12): 1111-1119.
6. Maisto, S.A., Carey, M.P., Carey, K.B., Gordon, C.M., and Gleason, J.R. *Use of the AUDIT and the DAST-10 to identify alcohol and drug use disorders among adults with a severe and persistent mental illness*. *Psychological Assessment*, 2000. 12: 186-192.
7. Skinner, H.A., *Guide for using the Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST)*. 1982, Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.