Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) Administration, Scoring and Interpretation Guidelines

Description of the Scale

The PASS is a valid and reliable 31-item self-report instrument designed to screen for problematic anxiety in antenatal and postpartum women((i.e. pregnant or less than 1 year postpartum) women who are English-speaking, literate, and aged 18 years and older.) It differentiates between high and low risk for presenting with an anxiety disorder by measuring four domains that address specific symptoms of anxiety as they present in perinatal women. These domains form subscales which include:

1) Excessive Worry and Specific Fears (1-10)
2) Perfectionism, Control and Trauma (11-18)
3) Social Anxiety (19-23)
4) Acute Anxiety and Adjustment.   (24-31)

Administration and Scoring

The PASS is suitable for use by researchers and clinicians in a variety of settings to screen for problematic perinatal anxiety. Respondents self rate each of the four clusters of anxiety symptoms, indicating the frequency of the symptoms over the previous month. The items are on a scale ranging from 0 ("not at all") to 3 ("almost always").

Example scoring:

	Not at all	Some times	Often	Almost Always
31. Feeling agitated	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3

Total Score
A total PASS score is obtained by adding all of the items on the PASS. A cut-off score of 26 is recommended to differentiate between high and low risk for presenting with an anxiety disorder.
Recommended severity ranges:

Anxiety Severity	*Range of scores*
Asymptomatic	0 - 20
Mild-moderate symptoms	21 – 41
Severe symptoms	42 – 93

Regarding Subscales

Subscale items describe clusters of symptoms which are characteristic of various anxiety disorders. Raised item scores indicate risk of types of anxiety disorder presentations as indicated in the table below.

The PASS is not a diagnostic scale. However for clinical purposes it can be useful to have some indication of the nature of the anxiety symptoms being experienced. In addition, the answers to item 7 should be considered individually, as this item is a clinical indicator of phobia.

Somerville, S., Dedman, K., Hagan, R., Oxnam, E., Wettinger, M., Byrne, S., Coo, S., Doherty, D., Page, A.C. (2014). The Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale: development and preliminary validation. Archives of Women's Mental Health, DOI: 10.1007/s00737-014-0425-8

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