

Elements of the Mental Status Exam

Appearance How does the client look? Well dressed with attention to detail? Well groomed? Age appropriate?

Behavior What is the client's activity level? Are there tics or stereotyped movements? How alert is the client? What are the client's facial expressions? Do they match the content discussed?

Attitude Is the client cooperative? Resistant? Fearful?

Mood/Affect What is the client's prevailing mood? Is there observable mood lability? Does the client show a range of affect? Is it appropriate to the content discussed?

Speech Is the client understandable? Are there any speech abnormalities (e.g., stuttering)? Is the client's speech pressured?

Thought Process Is the client's thought process circumstantial? Tangential? Is there evidence of flight of ideas? Is there poverty of thought? Perseverations?

Thought Content Does the client exhibit delusions? Phobias? Obsessions? Is the client preoccupied? Does the client have suicidal thought? Thoughts of harming others?

Perceptions Is the client experiencing hallucinations or illusions?

Cognition Is the client alert and oriented? Can the client demonstrate attention and concentration? Is the client's memory (short- and long-term) intact?

Insight Does the client demonstrate understanding of his or her own symptoms or situation?

Judgment Does the client demonstrate the ability to make sound, responsible decisions?

GABA (General Appearance, Behavior, Attitude)

General Appearance age/gender, appearance vs. stated age, body habitus, clothing, hygiene, grooming, physical abnormalities, tattoos, piercings

Behavior posture, eye contact, mannerisms, tics, activity level, psychomotor retardation/activation, akathisia, automatisms, catatonia, choreoathetoid, compulsions, dystonias, tremors

Attitude cooperative/uncooperative, seductive, flattering, charming, eager to please, entitled, controlling, hostile, guarded, critical, antagonistic, childish

Mood and Affect

Mood Patient reported emotional tone in quotations

Affect Physical expression of immediate feeling state.

Type: euthymic, hyperthymic, elevated, euphoric, dysphoric, irritable, anxious

Quality/range: Intense > full > constricted > blunted > flat

Motility: Labile > supple/stable > sluggish

Appropriateness to content: appropriate or not

Speech

Speech

Rate: pressured > rapid > regular > slowed

Rhythm: prosody, cadence, latency, spontaneity

Articulation: dysarthria, stuttering

Accent/dialect: tone, volume/modulation



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Not published yet.

Last updated 2nd June, 2024.

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