Assessment of Suicide Risk*

The patient and family need to partner with the provider to monitor safety in the depressed adolescent. When doing a risk assessment on a suicidal teen, there are several risk factors which should be taken into consideration. A mnemonic that can help with this assessment is “SAD PERSONS.” Risk factors are ranked with stars, ranging from 0-2, with 2 stars representing increased risk.

Adapted-SAD PERSONS Scale for Children and Youth

**Sex** (males are considered at increased risk)

**Age** (adolescents aged 15 and older are at greater risk than younger children)

**Depression or affective disorder**

**Previous suicide attempt**

**Ethanol or drug abuse**

**Rational thinking loss** (from physical or psychological disorder)

**Social supports lacking**

**Organized plan**

**Negligent parenting, significant family stressors, or suicidal modeling by parents or siblings**

**School problems** (aggressive behaviors or experiencing humiliation)

References:


Reprinted with permission from the Guidelines for Adolescent Depression-Primary Care (GLAD-PC) Toolkit (www.glad-pc.org), sponsored by the REACH Institute (www.TheReachInstitute.org).