

Delirium Rating Scale (DRS)

Trzepacz PT, Baker RW & Greenhouse J. A symptom rating scale for delirium.
Psychiatry Research 1988 23:89-97

Delirium Rating Scale (DRS)

Item 1 : temporal onset of symptoms

0. no significant change from longstanding behaviour, essentially a chronic or chronic-recurrent disorder.
1. gradual onset of symptoms, occurring within a 6-month period.
2. Acute change in behaviour or personality occurring over a month.
3. abrupt change in behaviour, usually occurring over a 1-to 3-day period

Item 2: Perceptual disturbances

0. non evident by history or observation
1. feelings of depersonalization or derealisation.
2. visual illusions or misperceptions including macropsia, micropsia, e.g. may urinate in wastebasket or mistake bedclothes for something else.
3. Evidence that the patient is markedly confused about external reality, not discriminating between dreams and reality.

Items 3: Hallucination type

0. hallucinations not present
1. auditory hallucinations present by patient's history or inferred by observation, with or without auditory hallucinations
2. tactile, olfactory, or gustatory hallucinations present with or without visual auditory hallucinations.

Items 4: Delusions

0. Not present
1. delusion are systematizes, i.e. well-organizes and persistent
2. delusions are new and not part of a pre-existing primary psychiatric disorder.

3. delusions are not well circumscribed; are transient, poorly organised, and mostly in response to misperceived environmental cues; e.g. are paranoid and involve persons who are in reality caregivers, loved ones, hospital staff, etc.

Item 5: psychomotor behaviour

0. no significant retardation or agitation
1. mild restlessness, tremulousness, or anxiety evident by observation and change from patient's usual behaviour.
2. moderate agitation with pacing, remove i.v.'s etc.
3. severe agitation, needs to be restrained, may be combative; or has significant withdrawal from the environment, but not due to major depression or schizophrenic catatonia.

Item 6: cognitive status during formal testing

0. no cognitive deficits, or deficits which can be alternatively explained by lack of education or prior mental retardation
1. very mild cognitive deficits which might be attributed to inattention due to acute pain, fatigue, depression, or anxiety associated with having a medical illness.
2. cognitive deficit largely in one major area tested; must include periods of disorientation to time or place at least once each 24-hrs period; registration and/or recall are abnormal; concentration is reduced.
3. Severe cognitive deficits, including motor or verbal perseverations, confabulations, disorientation to person, remote and recent memory deficits, and inability to cooperate with formal mental status testing.

Item 7: physical disorder

0. None present or active
1. Presence of any physical disorder which might affect mental state.
2. Specific drug, infection, metabolic, central nervous system lesion, or other medical problem which can be temporally implicated in causing the altered behaviour or mental status.

Item 8: sleep wake cycle disturbance

0. not present, awake and alert during the day, and sleeps without significant disruption at night.
1. occasional drowsiness during day and mild sleep continuity disturbances at night; may have nightmares but can readily distinguish from reality.
2. frequent napping and unable to sleep at night, constituting a significant disruption of or a reversal of the usual sleep-wake cycle.
3. drowsiness prominent, difficulty staying alert during interview, loss of self-control over alertness and somnolence
4. drifts into stuporous or comatose periods

item 9: lability of mood

0. not present; mood stable.
1. affect/mood somewhat altered and changes over the course of hours; patient states that mood changes are not under self-control.
2. significant mood changes which are inappropriate to situation, including fear, anger, or tearfulness; rapid shifts of emotion , even over several minutes
3. severe disinhibition of emotions, including temper outburst, uncontrolled inappropriate laughter, or crying.

Item 10: variability of symptoms

1. symptoms stable and mostly present during daytime
2. symptoms worsen at night.
4. fluctuating intensity of symptoms, such that they wax and wane during a 24-hr period.

Directives for scoring

Items are rated from 0 to either 2 or 3 or 4 points. Maximal score is 33.
There are text descriptions for each item rating.

Calculation of subscale Scores

DRS : 10 items

Maximum score : 33

item	score
1 Temporal onset of symptoms	0 1 2 3
2 Perceptual disturbance	0 1 2 3
3 Hallucination type	0 1 2 3
4 Delusions	0 1 2 3
5 Psychomotor behavior	0 1 2 3
6 Cognitive status during formal testing	0 1 2 3 4
7 Physical disorder	0 1 2
8 Sleep-wake cycle disturbance	0 1 2 3
9 Lability of mood	4
10 Variability of symptoms	0 1 2 3 0 2 4