BITE

Bulimic Investigatory Test, Edinburgh (BITE)

The BITE is a self-report screening questionnaire for bulimia nervosa and binge eating that assesses their behavioral and cognitive features. It yields a symptom score and a severity score, the latter based on the frequency of binge episodes and compensatory behaviors.

Number of questions	33 questions
Estimated duration	10 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Bulimic Investigatory Test, Edinburgh
Target audience	Adolescents and adults
Authors	M. Henderson, C. P. L. Freeman (1987)
Category	Eating disorders

Preview of the 33 questions

Do you eat according to a regular pattern every day?

Yes No

Are you on a strict diet to lose weight?

Yes No

If you give up on your diet just once, is that a failure?

Yes No

Do you count the calories in everything you eat, even when you are not on a diet?

Yes No

Do you ever fast for an entire day?

Yes | No

Administer your questionnaires online

Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

Scoring The BITE has 33 items divided into two scales. The Symptom scale comprises 30 yes/no items, each scored 1 when the answer reflects the symptom, for a score from 0 to 30. The Severity scale is based on 3 items (6, 7 and 27) covering the frequency of binge eating and compensatory behaviors. The total score is the sum of both scales.

Cutoffs from the original study Henderson and Freeman (1987) set three reference points. A Symptom score of 20 or more indicates disordered eating behavior and the possible presence of binge eating. A Severity score of 5 or more corresponds to a clinically significant level. A total score of 25 or more reflects a highly disordered eating pattern with binge eating.

Later validation studies In the Italian validation (Orlandi et al., 2005), a cutoff of 20 on the Symptom scale showed good sensitivity for bulimia nervosa but did not distinguish it from other disorders involving binge eating (binge-eating disorder, anorexia nervosa binge-eating/purging type). In Mexican women (Franco et al., 2010), the most suitable cutoffs were lower (21 for the total, 15 for symptoms, 6 for severity), with sensitivity and specificity above 0.80 for the total score and the Symptom scale. In adolescents from the general population (Rivas et al., 2004), specificity was high but sensitivity lower than in clinical samples, hence a risk of false negatives.

Reliability Internal consistency is high for the Symptom scale (alpha 0.95 to 0.96) and more modest for the Severity scale (0.62 to 0.77). One-week test-retest reliability is 0.86.

Points of caution The BITE identifies bulimia well in people of normal weight but tends to misclassify low-weight people who binge (Waller, 1992). The Severity score is less reliable and should be interpreted with caution.

Screening and diagnosis The BITE is a screening tool: a high score calls for a thorough clinical assessment, and it does not establish a diagnosis.

Are you a psychologist?

With Mentaal, get meaningful insights to support your patients.

- Standardized tests
- Automatic scoring
- Results sent by email

Try it for free

See all questionnaires

★★★★★

“I now use the platform every day, it's so comprehensive, reliable and remarkably easy to use.”

 Laura V. - Online Psychologist