

Overt Aggression Scale (OAS)

The OAS is a clinical observation scale designed to objectively assess overt aggressive behavior in adults and children, particularly in inpatient psychiatry or institutional settings. It measures four dimensions of aggression: verbal aggression, physical aggression against objects, physical aggression against self, and physical aggression against other people. The tool makes it possible to document each aggressive episode according to its level of severity, as well as the interventions put in place by the team. It is particularly useful for longitudinal monitoring, risk assessment, analysis of treatment response, and the standardization of observations in both clinical practice and research.

Number of questions	16 questions
Estimated duration	5 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Overt Aggression Scale
Target audience	Adults and children
Authors	Stuart C. Yudofsky, Jonathan M. Silver, W. Jackson, Jean Endicott, Daniel Williams (1986)
Category	Mood disorders, Personality disorders

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Scoring & interpretation

For each aggressive episode, identify the most severe behavior observed and assign the corresponding score in one of the four categories: 1 to 4 for verbal aggression, 5 to 8 for aggression against objects, 9 to 12 for aggression against self, 13 to 16 for aggression against other people. The clinician can then record the maximum score, the sum of episodes, and their frequency, while noting the interventions carried out. Higher scores reflect more severe aggression. Interpretation is based on the clinical context and changes over time, with no universal diagnostic cutoff.

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