THE CAGE-A TEST

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Development: Originally designed to screen for alcoholism, the CAGE questions were developed from a clinical study undertaken in 1968 at North Carolina Memorial Hospital. Using a general hospital population, one hundred and thirty medical and surgical patients were studied in detail. The CAGE has high face validity. Early validation testing was successfully done among mostly male alcoholics in an inpatient treatment setting; among people found guilty of driving while intoxicated (DWI) it proved less successful.

More recently the CAGE was tested in a general population of 10,000 obstetrical patients not seeking help. The screen demonstrated good concurrent validity in targeting congenital anomalies in the newborns of women screened.

The CAGE-A was originally tested in 1991 with entering college freshman and patients from substance abuse treatment centers. The criterion validity update in 1992 was with patients from a community based family medicine clinic.

The CAGE-A is more sensitive but less specific for substance abusers than the CAGE, especially when a reduced criterion score was employed.
SCORING THE CAGE-A:

Two or more affirmative responses may indicate the need for referral to behavioral health services.

It is suggested that affirmative answers be followed with questions such as "When?" or "Tell me more about it."

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Directions: Please circle Yes or No after each of the following four questions.

During the last 12 months:

Have you ever felt you ought to cut down on your drinking or drug use? Yes or No

Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking or drug use? Yes or No

Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking or drug use? Yes or No

Have you ever felt the need for an eye-opener, or awakened wanting a drink or another drug? Yes or No