

UNCOPE Plus & MH: Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Screen

The basic six-item UNCOPE (Items 5 – 10) has been found to be quite accurate in identifying substance use disorders at various levels of severity. The first five items map to five different DSM-5 criteria and the last item suggests self-medication intent. Thus, three or more positive responses would suggest meeting at least a mild diagnosis. Research with the UNCOPE has found that about 85% of those with three or more positive responses fall into the severe range based upon detailed diagnostic inquiry with structured interviews such as the CAAPE-5 or SUDDS-5.

The UNCOPE Plus added four items on quantity and frequency of use. This allows one to screen for potentially excessive or harmful use in the absence of current diagnostic indications. One strategy for providing feedback is included in this document.

The final four items (Items 11 – 14) consist of two screens. The first two items have been identified as indicating possible PTSD, and the second set as identifying likely major depressive episodes. With the addition of these two brief screens, the 14 items provided here allow for preliminary screening for the three most prevalent conditions among inmates in local jails and likely other distressed populations.

UNCOPE Plus & MH: Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health

Screen

1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

(0) Never

(1) Monthly or less (3) 2 to 3 times a week

(2) 2 to 4 times a month (4) 4 or more times a week

2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?

(0) 1 or 2

(1) 3 or 4 (3) 7, 8, or 9

(2) 5 or 6 (4) 10 or more

3. How often do you have five or more drinks on one occasion?

(0) Never

(1) Less than monthly (3) Weekly

(2) Monthly (4) Daily or almost daily

4. How often do you use marijuana, any other drug, or prescription medication to get high?

(0) Never

(1) Monthly or less (3) 2 to 3 times a week

(2) 2 to 4 times a month (4) 4 or more times a week

5. Have you spent more time drinking or using drugs than you intended to?

(0) No

(1) Yes

6. Have you ever neglected some of your usual responsibilities because of drinking or using drugs?

(0) No

(1) Yes

7. Have you felt you wanted or needed to cut down on your drinking or drug use in the last year?

(0) No

(1) Yes

8. Has anyone objected to your drinking or drug use?

(0) No

(1) Yes

9. Have you found yourself thinking a lot about drinking or using drugs?

(0) No

(1) Yes

10. Have you ever used alcohol or drugs to relieve emotional discomfort, such as sadness, anger, or boredom?

(0) No

(1) Yes

Continue on next page

UNCOPE Plus & MH: Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Screen

If you have ever experienced or witnessed a traumatic event, have you:

11. Experienced intense distress when something reminds you of the stressful event?

(0) No

(1) Yes

12. Have you actively avoided thoughts or feelings associated with the event?

(0) No

(1) Yes

If you ever had a period of two or more weeks when you felt depressed, blue, or sad did you:

13. Have trouble thinking or concentrating?

(0) No

(1) Yes

14. Have little energy or were easily fatigued most days?

(0) No

(1) Yes

UNCOPE Plus & MH: Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health

Screen

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERPRETATION AND FEEDBACK TO RESPONDENT

The following scores and recommendations should be based on the highest score or algorithm met. This is only a draft to suggest a model and is not intended to represent the scoring or recommendation criteria to be adopted. Those wishing to provide feedback on the UNCOPE-Plus findings are advised to collect data to validate the appropriateness of the interpretation and feedback based on the population for which the screening is intended.

SUBSTANCE USE FEEDBACK

Alcohol use scale (Items 1-3)

1. Level of use modest (Items 2 + 3 = 0)
2. Use may exceed recommended level

For males: ((Item 1 = 4 AND Item 2 > 1) OR (Item 1 >1 AND Item 2 > 2))

3. Potentially hazardous use ((Item 1 > 0 AND Item 2 > 2) OR (Item 3 > 1))
4. Potentially harmful level of use (Total of Items 1-3 = 10+) OR (Item 1 > 1 AND Item 2 = 4))

Drug use scale (Item 4)

Diagnostic indications (UNCOPE):

1. No problem indicated (UNCOPE score < 3)
2. Some risk for substance abuse/misuse (UNCOPE score >2)
3. Indications of substance abuse (Items 5 & 7 both positive and total UNCOPE score = 3+)
4. Indications of possible substance dependence (Items 6 & 8 both positive and UNCOPE score = 3+)
5. Strong indication of substance dependence (Items 5-8 all positive and UNCOPE score = 4+)

ADVICE (Partial feedback statements bolded)

Drinking seems to be within normal limits (Alcohol use scale = 1 and UNCOPE score <3)

Drug use although not frequent may be a source of legal or other problems (Item 4 = 2; UNCOPE score < 3)

Comment that drug use seems frequent and should be reduced (Item 4 > 2)

Advised to reduce alcohol use (Alcohol use > 1 and either Item 2 > 1 or Item 3 >1 AND UNCOPE score <3)

(For females, Item 2 > 0 may be used as this could indicate possible intoxication)

Strongly advise to try reducing alcohol use (Alcohol use score > 2)

Suggest **possible need for counseling for alcohol if unable to reduce alcohol use** (Alcohol use scale > 2 and

UNCOPE score > 2);

possible need for counseling for drugs if unable to reduce drug use (and/or Drug use [Item 4] > 2 and UNCOPE score > 2)

Suggest **help to reduce both alcohol and drug use** if both previous conditions are met (i.e. Alcohol use scale > 2 and drug use [Item 4] > 2 and UNCOPE score > 2)

Suggest an evaluation ((Alcohol use > 2 and/or Drug use > 2) and UNCOPE score > 3)

Suggest need for assessment at a treatment provider

((Alcohol use scale > 3 and/or Drug use [Item 4] >3) and UNCOPE score > 4)

Note: There are currently no suggested feedback statements for PTSD and major depression screens.

UNCOPE Plus & MH: Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Screen

REFERENCES

UNCOPE

Hoffmann, N. G., Hunt, D. E., Rhodes, W. M., & Riley, K. J. (2003). UNCOPE: A Brief Substance Dependence Screen for Use with Arrestees. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 33 (1), 29-44.

Campbell, T. C., Hoffmann, N. G., Hoffmann, T. D., & Gillaspay, J. A. (2005) UNCOPE: A screen for substance dependence among state prison inmates. *The Prison Journal*, 85(1), 7-17.

Urofsky, R. I., Seiber, E., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2007, August 27). UNCOPE: Evaluation of a brief screen for detecting substance dependence among juvenile justice populations. *Journal of School Counseling*, 5(17). Retrieved September 9, 2007, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ901178.pdf>

Proctor, S. L., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2016). The UNCOPE: An effective brief screen for DSM-5 substance use disorders in correctional settings. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 30, 613–618. doi: 10.1037/adb0000170

Proctor, S. L., Kopak, A. M., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2017). Psychometric properties of the UNCOPE: Screening for DSM-5 substance use disorder among a state juvenile justice population. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 56 (7), 494-504. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/10509674.2017.1359224

Major Depression

Proctor, S. L., Hoffmann, N. G., & Kopak, A. M. (2021). An ultra-brief 2-item depression screening tool for correctional populations. *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 27(1), 36 – 39.

PTSD

Guston, K., Combs, E., Kopak, A. M., Raggio, A., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2019). A PTSD screen for forensic populations. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 63(1), 86-100.

Advance online publication 2018. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X18779173>

Prevalence in correctional populations

Raggio, A.L., Hoffmann, N. G., & Kopak, A. M. (2017). Results from a comprehensive assessment of behavioral health problems among rural jail inmates. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 56:3, 217-235, DOI: 10.1080/10509674.2017.1290006

Proctor, S. L., Hoffmann, N. G., & Raggio, A. (2018). Prevalence of substance use disorders and psychiatric conditions among county jail inmates: Changes and stability over time. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*. Advance online publication. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*. doi: 10.1177/0093854818796062

Kopak, A. M., Raggio, A. L., & Hoffmann, N. G. (2019). Co-occurring substance use disorders, mental health conditions and offending patterns among local jail detainees. *Journal of Law and Criminal Justice*, 7(1), 1-10. ISSN: 2374-2674(Print), 2374-2682(Online)